THE MARTYR OF FUTUNA

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Gilmore, Florence(translator)

Martyr of Futuna, The
(CHANEL,BLESSED PETER*LOUIS*MARIE)

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BLESSED PETER-LOUIS-MARIE CHANEL

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THE MARTYR OF FUTUNA

BLESSED PETER CHANEL

OF THE

SOCIETY OF MARY

PREPARED FROM THE FRENCH BY

FLORENCE GILMORE

CATHOLIC FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY

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718

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	—Family and Early Education	1
II	—At School in Cras	7
III	—The Preparatory Seminary	12
IV	—The Seminary	19
V	—Ambérieux	25
VI	—Pastor of Crozet	31
VII	—First Years in the Society of Mary	50
VIII	—Superior of the Preparatory Seminary of Belley	61
IX	—Religious Profession and Last Good-byes	71
X	—From Havre to Wallis	83
XI	—Futuna	100
XII	—Progress of the Mission	128
XIII	—Persecution	157
XIV	—Martyrdom—Conversion of the Island	184

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

Blessed Peter Chanel.....(Frontispiece)

The Pastor at Cras..... 7

The Seminary at Meximieux..... 18

The Present Church at Brou..... 30

The Very Rev. Father Colin, Founder of the Society of Mary..... 46

A Bird's-eye View of Belley..... 61

Cuet—The Home of Blessed Chanel..... 72

Cuet—The Bedroom of Blessed Chanel..... 88

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Bataillon..... 99

The Parish Church at Cuet..... 116

Interior of the Church at Cuet..... 132

At Singave, Futuna—The Church..... 149

Missioners and Natives of Futuna..... 162

At Tonga, with Frs. Guitta and Loyson..... 174

The Church at Alo, Island of Futuna..... 186

Tonga—Chapel and Catechist School Dedicated to Blessed Chanel..... 198

PREFACE

There is no Congregation in the United States that has done more to develop a world-wide heart in the Catholic body of the country than the Marist Fathers. To that Congregation Peter Chanel, the subject of this Life, belonged and on it he has left his impress.

From the Marist Fathers especially then, and from their many friends, the appearance in English of Blessed Chanel's life will receive grateful recognition. It will find, however, a wider circle and will help much to develop in the English-speaking world the now strongly-growing missionary spirit.

It is with special pleasure that we of Maryknoll welcome the appearance of the present volume, which Miss Gilmore has interestingly adapted from the French, and we are glad indeed to be its sponsor.

THE CATHOLIC FOREIGN MISSION SEMINARY,

JAMES A. WALSH,
Superior.

Many of the photographs reproduced in this book were gathered in France, at the home of the Martyr and elsewhere, by the present Superior of Maryknoll. The others were received directly by THE FIELD AFAR from the island of Futuna, where Blessed Chanel won his palm of martyrdom.

The Martyr of Futuna

(*BLESSED PETER CHANEL*)

CHAPTER I.

Family and Early Education.

In Cuet, a little, unknown village of Eastern France, there was born, on July twelfth, 1803, a child destined to be the apostle of Futuna and the first martyr of Oceania. He was baptized on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and received the name Peter. Before his birth his mother had consecrated him to the Blessed Virgin, which accounts, perhaps, for the loving, tender devotion to her that marked his whole life. When he learned of this consecration he added to his name that of Mary; and having real love for St. Aloysius of Gonzaga, chose him, also, as patron and model, at the time he was confirmed.

Peter was the son of Francis Chanel and Mary Ann Sibellas, the fifth of their eight children. They were honest, hard-working peasants, and like most of their neighbors, good Christians, the Revolution having tainted neither faith nor morals in that quiet corner of France. Uneducated, they had a kind of knowledge that is priceless: they knew their religion thoroughly and practiced it with earnestness and simplicity.

Mme. Chanel raised her children lovingly and wisely, early instilling into their little hearts the love of God and of His Blessed Mother, a horror of sin, the fear of hell and a longing for heaven. She taught them to pray, often praying with them when they were small, and later reminding them daily, almost hourly,

to raise their hearts to God. We can judge of the character of her piety by this reflection with which she was wont to end all her prayers: "Courage, my soul! Time passes quickly, and eternity is close at hand." Her husband, uprightness itself, endorsed all her teaching, and supported it by the example of a life hardly less edifying than her own.

Little Peter responded faithfully to this careful training, from his earliest years showing unusual piety. The first words he lisped were the names of Jesus and Mary. Joining his tiny hands and raising his eyes, he would repeat them with a reverence remarkable in a child.

A cousin of his own age, Jane Mary Chanel, lived for a time within their home, and the children, having the same tastes, became devoted friends. "Whenever we could," she related, long afterward, "we would go to Mass, occasionally at Saint-Didier-d'Aussant, but more often at Monteval. We delighted in imitating all we saw: we rang the bell for Mass, we pretended to eat 'le pain bénit,'[1] we had processions. My cousin was always first to propose such games and carried them through with marvellous grace and sweetness."

Jane Mary was only seven and a half years old when she left Cuet and went with her parents to a hamlet some miles away, in the neighborhood of Cras; but Peter soon found that Mary Frances, a sister five years younger than he, had the interests and inclinations which had made Jane Mary so congenial a companion, and ever after his cousin's place was more than filled. The brother and sister were alike in appearance and character. They loved to work together and to play together; side by side they prayed to God and to His Blessed Mother, and hand in hand carried to the poor such alms as the family could afford to dispense. Nor did their paths diverge in after life. Both were destined to become religious in congregations bearing the name of Mary.

[1]Bread that had been blessed.

Even his appearance revealed the beauty of Peter's childish soul. He was a slender boy, modest in bearing, with regular features, and an expression singularly sweet and intelligent. There was something angelic about him which made him beloved by all. Not that, as a child, he was without his little faults, though it would be hard strongly to condemn the only one we know. If any of his brothers or sisters was punished he was heartbroken, and would slip away and grieve alone until the storm passed; and whenever he saw some one in tears he was distressed beyond measure. He was told severely that such lively sympathy was extreme and should be controlled; so, a mere child, Peter had his first lessons in the difficult task of schooling his own heart. Such a loving heart it was!

Among the poor it is often necessary for very little children to work, and Peter was only seven when he was first sent to guard his father's sheep. "I had to get up early," he told a friend, years afterward. "My mother (she was so good and pious!) never failed to remind me to say my prayers before I set forth. I would kiss her good-bye, and telling me to be good, she would slip over my arm the little basket which contained my dinner. I always went gaily, followed by my dog, who was ugly but very intelligent."

Other children of his age were scattered through the meadows and on the hillsides, employed as he was, and in the games they played together Peter's piety often manifested itself. He would suggest building little altars; he imitated the ceremonies of Holy Mass, and when he could remember the sermon of the preceding Sunday, he repeated it for his playmates with charming simplicity and earnestness. In summer he seldom returned home without a bouquet of wild flowers to place before Our Lady's picture.

When he was eight years old he made his first confession. After doing his best to examine his conscience thoroughly he went to his mother and told her all the faults he remembered, adding, "Help me to

think of more; you know better than I what I have done." When he left the confessional he knelt for a minute before the Blessed Virgin's altar, and then ran home, naïvely giving vent to his joy. One would have thought he was a notorious sinner, converted at last.

His parents could neither read nor write, but knowing the value of the education which had been denied them, they sent Peter, during the winter of 1810, to the nearest primary school. The distance was great, and the roads bad whenever it rained or snowed, so his lessons were often interrupted; and when spring came he went back to the sheep and quickly forgot what little he had learned. The following winter he went again to school, but with the same result. There was no one to take his place with the flock; besides, his parents had, as yet, no thought that he would ever be anything better than a small farmer, even as his father. But God had His designs for the child: and His ways are wonderful.

Not far from Cuet is the village of Cras. For some years after the Revolution it was without a priest, but Father Trompier, a learned and holy man and a lover of children, was sent there in 1811. He opened two schools, one for boys, another for girls, and enlarged his own house that he might be able to keep there a few pupils to whom he taught Latin, with the hope that one day some or all of them would become priests. Towards the end of 1812 this holy priest met Peter, keeping guard over his sheep. Instantly attracted by the child, he asked his name, age, and whether he had ever been to school. He saw and questioned him more than once afterward, and each time was more deeply impressed by Peter's candor, modesty, and piety. One day he asked him if he would like to go to his school at Cras. "Oh yes, Father! There is nothing I should like so much!" Peter replied, his face beaming at the thought. Father Trompier went at once to see his parents, who quickly consented to let him go. Before

Peter reached home all was settled. God's design had begun to unfold.

So, during the winter of 1814-1815, Peter was a pupil of the school at Cras, and lived nearby with his aunt and little Jane Mary. When vacation time came he resumed the care of his father's sheep, but with books for his daily companions. "What has come over our little Peter?" his parents said wonderingly. "Since he came from Cras he loves to read." In the autumn he joyfully returned to school, but soon afterward was sorrow stricken to learn that Father Trompier had been appointed pastor of Monsols. The cloud passed quickly, for the good priest proposed to take Peter with him, and to charge himself with his education. M. Chanel accepted his bounty simply and gratefully. Peter was radiantly happy. "If the Blessed Virgin had not taken the matter into her own hands it wouldn't have turned out so well!" he cried.

At Monsols the boy worked hard at his lessons. When he was at leisure he liked to read any book he found interesting, but none attracted him so strongly as the "Foreign Mission Annals," which awoke within his heart a great desire to cross the seas and to devote his life to the good of poor pagans. The thought of shedding his blood for Christ made his heart bound for joy. Thus did his vocation early manifest itself. His prudent director considered his transports the flower of a childish enthusiasm, though he made use of all such generous feelings to nourish a piety already marked by intense devotion to the Mother of God, deep reverence for all holy things, and a love for the ceremonies of the Church.

But his books and his devotions did not fill Peter's time. He had a little plot in Father Trompier's garden on which he lavished much care; and all his flowers found their way to the altar of the Blessed Virgin. His classmates thought him a merry companion, and they loved and admired him. One day, seeing him come out of the church, a mischievous boy proposed

playing a trick on him, but another objected: "We had better not. Everyone will be angry with us if we hurt him. Besides, he is so good-hearted." Peter played all games with charming gaiety, delighted to win, but losing with perfect good humor, saying that it made him happy to see other people glad because they were winning.

The climate of Monsols proved to be injurious to Father Trompier's health, and a change having become necessary, it was decided that he should return to his beloved Cras. His parishioners were distressed to lose him and the child whom they had learned to love. Many, many years afterward they still cherished Peter's memory, proud to have known an apostle and martyr. They talked of his goodness, his piety, his angelic candor, and of the reverence with which he served Mass; they said that he sang exquisitely. Fifty years after he left Monsols, an old man there loved to tell that one day when Father Trompier was teaching the children he was called away, and told them to be good and very quiet while he was gone. He was hardly out of sight before the boys began to misbehave, all but Peter, who obediently remained silent in his place.

THE PASTOR AT CRAS

CHAPTER II.

At School in Cras.

The good people of Cras had grieved to lose Father Trompier, and rejoiced when he returned to them. As for Peter, his heart overflowed with happiness at seeing again his relatives, his old schoolmates, and the little church he loved; and although he had been away only a year, one and all observed that he had improved in many ways. With fresh ardor for his studies he took his place once more in the school, but did not return to his aunt's house. Father Trompier wished to keep him near, and arranged that he should live at the presbytery with several other boys whom he was training. One of these, who became a priest, wrote of Peter, in 1843, "I love to remember the happy days at Cras when I first knew and loved my dear friend, Peter Chanel. Ah, if I could have foreseen that one day he would win the palm of martyrdom and be proposed by the Church for our veneration, how I should have observed his least acts of virtue! I can almost see him still as he was with his companions, both in class and at recreation. Although his health was frail he was very industrious. He was intelligent and truly pious, and as merry as the merriest at our games. We never saw him sad unless one of us was punished; then he always had a word of excuse for the culprit, and did not rest until he had obtained his pardon. We all loved him, and although we knew well that he was Father Trompier's favorite we never felt the least twinge of jealousy."

Of Peter's school days at Cras several incidents have been preserved, trifling in themselves, but precious in the light of the glory that awaited him. One day a classmate asked Peter to lend him his exercise book that he might copy from it the work he had been told to do. Peter, listening only to the dictates of his heart, gave it readily. The little fraud was discovered, and both boys were punished. On another occasion Peter was deprived of a visit to his relatives, because his theme showed signs of carelessness. One of his companions murmured at this, but he said cheerfully, "I'd be very foolish if I did not understand that it is all for my own good." Against the wish of Father Trompier some of the boys would steal away to bathe in the river, and more than once they tried to persuade Peter to go with them, saying that no one would ever know. "God knows; that is enough for me," he would reply; and not once did he go.

His lively faith filled him with intense love of God, which, in its turn, taught him to love those about him, and to be tender towards the poor. Young as he was, he had taken to heart the words of the Master, "As long as you did it unto one of these my least brethren, you did it unto Me." The sight of a beggar, ragged and hungry, would move him to tears. Nor did he content himself with sympathizing with the sufferings of the poor; he did all in his power to lighten their misery, giving away the whole of the slender allowance he had for little boyish pleasures.

It was customary, at that time, to wait long before admitting a child to the Holy Table. Peter, intelligent and unusually devout, was thirteen and a half years old before he made his First Communion. When he was told to prepare himself for the great day he was overjoyed. He wrote to his father and mother a letter fairly radiating happiness, and spent the intervening weeks in constant, loving preparation. Some one who was present at the First Communion Mass said, long afterward, "I shall never forget Peter as he was on

that day. There were many children in the class, all sweet and edifying, but I could not take my eyes from his angelic face. It seems to me I can still see him, kneeling as he did, with clasped hands, his face betraying the joy of his soul. He looked more like an angel than a child. His father and mother were there, proud, *so* proud of their little shepherd boy."

That he might persevere in the good resolutions made at this time Peter arranged for himself a rule of life, regulating his prayers, his confessions and Holy Communions, his little charities to the poor. His devotion to the Blessed Virgin inspired him to promise to say the Rosary daily; and a spiritual insight, remarkable in a boy, enabling him to understand that all perfection lays in the doing of God's Will, he determined to follow It joyfully in all things. The resolutions, as a whole, were such as a seminarian might make at the close of a fervent retreat, rather than what is expected of a boy of thirteen. Best of all, he not only made but kept them. His First Communion was the starting point of an effort for higher things. He redoubled his ardor for work and his zeal for the service of God.

Not long after this there came to him one of those bitter trials with which God sometimes tries even great saints. Who does not recall the temptation to despair which pursued St. Francis de Sales so relentlessly that at last he became seriously ill? A temptation of like nature assailed Peter. Suddenly he felt a deep disgust for study, and a sense of discouragement which he vainly tried to overcome. He became sad and dreamy and his health suffered. One day he felt that he could bear it no longer, and taking his books he started homeward without saying a word to Father Trompier. As he passed the village church he met a woman, whose goodness had long before won his confidence. She stopped him and inquired where he was going. Peter told her, and she asked anxiously, "Have you spoken to your aunt? And to the curé? Have you, at least,

consulted the Blessed Virgin?" Peter made no reply, and the woman added, "Go into the church and pray to the Blessed Virgin, and do as she bids you." Peter obeyed. Leaving his books in the nave he went to his Mother's feet and said his beads. For him, as for St. Francis, prayer proved all powerful. He hurried back to the old woman, all trace of discouragement gone. "Well?" she said, smiling. "I will stay," Peter promised; and returning to the presbytery he resumed his studies with hearty good will.

Twenty years later he referred feelingly to this day. "I don't know what had come over me," he said. "The devil was surely getting the best of me. A little more and he would have done me an ugly turn. Without understanding why, I was in an agony that bordered on despair. I owe it to the Blessed Virgin that I regained my courage." Nor did he ever forget his debt to the woman who had counseled him so wisely.

In the summer of 1819, when he had passed his sixteenth birthday, Father Trompier, capable though he was of leading his pupil, step by step, to the threshold of the sanctuary, judged it best that he should make his higher studies in a diocesan school. The preparatory seminary of Meximieux,[1] founded by Father Ruivet, enjoyed an enviable reputation, and there he sent Peter. It had about three hundred students, under the care of Father Loras,[2] later, Bishop of Dubuque, Iowa. Mme. Chanel accompanied her son, wishing herself to introduce him to Father Loras, and lovingly eager, no doubt, to see his new home.

Two incidents marked their journey. In the coach with them there was a young girl on her way to Saint-Rembert, to work in a cotton-mill. She talked to

[1]Meximieux, in later years, counted among its students Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, and Bishop O'Gorman of Sioux Falls.

[2]Matthias Loras was born at Lyons in 1792. His father was guillotined during the Revolution. He was ordained in 1815, spent some years as superior of a seminary, and in 1829 came to Mobile, Alabama, where he labored for eight years. He was consecrated first Bishop of Dubuque, Iowa, in 1837. He found in his see one priest and a little scattered flock; when he died, in 1858, he left 48 priests with 60 churches and 54,000 Catholics.

every one, and in a manner hardly edifying. To keep out of the conversation Peter pretended to be asleep; but growing indignant, at last, he brusquely interrupted her. "We are sorry, Mademoiselle," he said, "that you are not coming home from the cotton-mill, instead of going there: in that case you might have some cotton with you, which we could borrow to put in our ears." Every one laughed, and the girl was silenced.

Soon, a young tourist made himself disagreeable by quizzing Peter; and when he learned that the bright faced youth was on his way to the college at Meximieux, condoled with him on going to such a place, and hinted broadly that, no doubt, he would have chosen another school had he had sufficient means. Peter explained that he preferred Meximieux to any other place in France, but the man continued his tirade; and losing patience, at length, Peter exclaimed, "You would do well, Sir, to say no more!" "So! From your tone one would imagine a fly had stung you!" his tormentor said angrily. "Yes, a very annoying fly," Peter retorted instantly.

Sallies such as these would have astonished his intimates, so rarely did he resort to anything of the kind. He was too gentle often to wound.

CHAPTER III.

The Preparatory Seminary.

The four years which Peter spent at Meximieux were of utmost importance in the development of his character and the cultivation of his mind, but they passed quietly, almost monotonously, and their story is not long. The tender piety, planted in his soul by a good mother and carefully nourished at Cras, matured during these years; he became recollected, more and more reverent, more and more amiable. Perhaps there is no better commentary on this and other parts of his life than that, after his martyrdom when those desiring his canonization wrote to his old friends, the responses received were almost identical: Peter had been "studious," "pious," "gentle," "loving;" but each writer regrets that he did not notice him very particularly—so simple was he, and so unostentatious. Nor have we in his early letters a storehouse of many treasures, for in them he speaks but little of himself, and then nearly always playfully.

Peter's early impressions of Meximieux are given in a letter which he wrote to Father Trompier for New Year's Day. "With all my heart I wish you a happy New Year," he says. "May God spare you long for the sake of your parish and for mine! I cannot tell you, Father, how happy I am here! My teachers are so holy. And my schoolmates, almost all of them, have traits which I cannot help envying. My love for you urges me on to do my best."

From the first Peter took his place among the most promising students. When, after three months, his

718

first report was sent to his parents, they were proud to find that he held high rank in class and was distinguished for exemplary conduct. Father Trompier, to whom they gave the report, wrote to Father Loras: "I have deep interest in young Chanel, and his first report gave me intense satisfaction. The dear child will continue, I hope, to be your consolation and mine. I believe him to be called to the priesthood. He has a beautiful soul. I am happy that he is in your hands. Spare him neither reproof nor punishment."

At the close of his first uneventful year Peter hurried back to Cuet, only too happy to be at home once more. Without neglecting any of the study which had been laid out for him, he helped his parents with their work, as willing as of old to labor in the fields. Never was son more loving. He was the joy of that big, simple family circle.

October found him again at Meximieux, hard at work. His professor during this year and the preceding one, who had every opportunity of knowing him well, said later, "He was indeed 'beloved of God and men.' If I could have foreseen his glorious destiny, with what interest I should have observed and cherished every detail regarding him! I would have watched all his actions that I might now be able to picture them for you as fitting preludes of the virtues which made of him a holy priest, an apostle and a martyr. I do not believe he ever merited or received a word of reproach from his superiors, or had the least quarrel with his fellow students. His natural timidity tended to keep him aloof from the rough games in which quarrels so easily arise. His modesty and docility were perfect; his heart was loving and generous; he was all gentleness. In class he held high rank, applying himself habitually, in spite of the delicacy of his health. His piety was thoughtful, solid and tender. I well remember how he loved to pray at the foot of the Blessed Virgin's altar. Doubtless it was his filial love for her whom he delighted to

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call his good Mother, that won for him the priceless favors of becoming a member of the Society of Mary, and later of honoring her by his apostolate and martyrdom."

Toward the end of Peter's second year at Meximieux an epidemic swept over the town and adjoining country. Several fell ill at the college, and to safeguard the rest they were sent home. Peter's parents received him with a joy the greater that they had been much alarmed. During the long vacation which followed he resumed his humble work in the fields, but neglected neither his studies nor his devotions.

By the end of October, all danger having passed, the college was reopened. In a letter written to one of his cousins, Peter tells of his work for this year: "Well, after a long and difficult march through grammar and themes I have got to the region of belles-lettres. It seems to me that I have reached the most beautiful country in the world. Day after day we meet the best writers of ancient and modern times. We note their thoughts, their feelings, their style. Guided by an able professor such work develops the imagination, taste and judgment. I am still a novice at it, but, thanks be to God, I am full of courage.

"Nothing could be more varied than the subjects upon which we try our pens; sometimes it is a topographical description, or the story of some event; sometimes, a letter or a fable, an elegy, an idyl, etc. It goes without saying that in Greek and Latin we are given whatever is particularly difficult of translation. So, you see, the sphere of my work had grown; I only hope that my head will grow in proportion, so that I may reap the full benefit of all this."

That year passed, and another opened, his last at Meximieux, to be spent in the study of rhetoric. He had now to learn to think for himself, to reason, to draw conclusions. The study of rhetoric was not then exactly what it is today. Eloquence being defined as the gift or faculty of moving the minds and hearts

of others, rhetoric set forth the rules which should direct an orator in the development of his gift, and teach him all the means suitable for its use. The work of the year was directed almost entirely to this end, and Peter gave himself to it with ardor, knowing that it was splendid preparation for the priestly life to which day by day he felt more certain that God was calling him.

To every sermon Peter listened as if God were speaking by the mouth of His minister. "What did you think of the sermon?" a fellow student asked him one day. "I thought what Christ wished that we should think when He said to His apostles: 'Whosoever heareth you, heareth Me.'" "I know," his friend insisted, "but putting aside this view, what did you think of it as an oratorical effort?" "When I hear a sermon," Peter replied, "I realize that there are in me two persons, a Christian and a rhetorician. Only the Christian enters the church; the rhetorician remains outside the door." Not that he blamed others for passing judgment on the eloquence of a preacher; but for himself his faith and reverence made it impossible. This respect for the word of God extended to every trifle; for instance, seeing on the ground some leaves from a New Testament he picked them up lest they should be trampled under foot.

Month by month his piety deepened, a simple piety, entirely without affectation. During his first year at Meximieux he had been admitted into the Sodality of Our Lady, and later he was elected prefect. When told that he had been unanimously chosen he said in amazement, "But I thought such votes were cast conscientiously!" At once a new spirit permeated the Sodality. Peter became its very soul; he breathed into it new fervor, and a more ardent devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Following him through his spotless boyhood up to the heights of which he had dreamed as a child, his love for our Blessed Mother is ever the dominant

note of his spiritual life. Loving God as he did, could he have failed to love Her? It was noted at Meximieux how his face lighted up at the mere mention of her name. *"Auspice Dei Genetrice Maria"* he wrote on the first page of all his books and at the beginning of every theme. One day, having slightly injured his left hand, he dipped a pen into the blood and wrote these words, which voiced the master passion of his life: "To love Mary and to make her loved."

At prayer he seemed more like an angel than a boy. No service, however long, ever became wearisome to him, and it was his great happiness to serve at Mass. His devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was extraordinarily tender. What we now call frequent Holy Communion was then almost unknown, but he approached the Holy Table as often as he was permitted, always after very careful, very loving preparation.

Among the students Peter was popular from the first. He sympathized with their griefs and rejoiced over their successes; he was all kindness to the sick. At recreation he readily took part in the games, even in those he played poorly; and, as long before at Cras, he lost with perfect good humor. Among his many gifts of grace and nature his generosity must not be overlooked. He did not know how to be selfish. The little delicacies, sent him from home, were always divided; and nothing short of impossibility ever deterred him from doing a good turn to one of his associates. What is rarer, he had become so completely master of himself that he very seldom spoke impatiently, even under sudden and sharp provocation.

His patience was put to its hardest test when, for the good of two troublesome boys, one listless and lazy, the other turbulent and heedless, the prefect placed Peter between them. He had unceasingly to stimulate the laziness of one and put up with the restlessness of the other. The latter besieged him with questions, pushed him, and in various ways interfered

with his work. Peter never became impatient with his tormentor, and at last shamed him into letting him alone; he did even better: he made him work hard enough to attain a fairly creditable place in his classes. It would be a mistake to imagine that his victory was easily won. By nature Peter had neither patience nor humility; such virtues are the flower of real effort and constant prayer.

At one time two lads were received at Meximieux who were naturally lazy and had been pampered at home. They heartily disliked the close study, discipline and simple fare they found at the college; and having misbehaved, the punishment that followed added to their discontent. At last they determined to run away. It chanced that Peter met them at the door when they were slipping out and he stopped them, saying pleasantly, "Halt, friends! Your passports are not in order!" Then, more seriously, he added, "You poor boys! If you run away you will be publicly expelled. What a disgrace! And what a grief to your families! When I was a boy I, too, tried to run away; but, thank God, I was stopped in time. I should have regretted it all my life. Come back with me and try again." The boys began to cry and returned meekly. Peter did not forget them, but made it his duty to see them from time to time and say a kind, encouraging word. Twelve years later those boys were ordained and they made excellent priests.

Coming, though he did, from a family of illiterate peasants, Peter's politeness was exquisite. It sprang from the gentleness of his soul. None would have suspected his humble parentage, but he took care that all should know that he was the son of a hard working countryman, had been a shepherd in his childhood, and could never have aspired to a thorough education but for the bounty of Father Trompier.

It was during this last year at Meximieux that he became intimate with two classmates who were des-

tined to be his closest friends to the end: Claude Bret and Denis Joseph Maîtrepierre. The three were congenial in many ways, but their strongest bond was their love for the Foreign Missions and the desire to consecrate their lives to them. Father Loras, consumed with the same longing, was quick to discover their secret, and did all in his power to encourage and stimulate them. He hoped, indeed, that one day they would become his associates in some distant land, but this was not to be. When they left Meximieux he advised them to go slowly, and to leave the future to the direction of God's providence, praying constantly and with confidence.

The summer of 1823 saw Peter finish his course at Meximieux. For his philosophy he was obliged to go to the diocesan seminary of Belley. Although his two friends went with him it grieved him to leave the college which had been his home for four happy years. At once, however, he fell in love with his new surroundings. "We have excellent teachers, and our superior is a saint," he wrote enthusiastically. "The house is beautiful and conveniently arranged, and the surrounding country unusually lovely." From the first Peter and his friends were appreciated at Belley; he, in particular, arousing lively interest and deep affection. To his new studies he applied himself with all his old diligence, always holding high rank in class, although not remarkably gifted intellectually.

He had long hoped to become a priest and had thought that God was calling him. The moment had come when he must decide. His prayers were lengthened, his visits to the Blessed Sacrament became more frequent, he imposed certain penances upon himself, weighed before God the dispositions of his soul, and consulted his confessor, who bade him unhesitatingly prepare to enter the Seminary. With his whole heart Peter thanked God. By increased fervor he tried to make himself less unworthy to take God's place among men and at the Altar of Sacrifice.

THE SEMINARY AT MEXIMIEUX, FRANCE

CHAPTER IV.

The Seminary.

The diocese of Belley was reestablished in 1819, and Bishop Devie consecrated in 1822. His first care was to provide a suitable seminary for his students, which he found in an old Augustinian convent, adjoining the beautiful church of Our Lady of Brou. Classes were opened in 1823, and the following autumn Peter sought and obtained admission.

He said to Father Bourdin, a friend and his first biographer, "I could never express the feelings that filled my heart when I put on ecclesiastical dress to go to Brou. My emotion was even greater when I crossed the threshold of the Seminary. I found there a number of my old schoolmates. All had received tonsure and Minor Orders. I seemed at once close to ordination; I saw the priesthood so near at hand that I felt in the depths of my soul not only joy and confidence, but fear. Then our retreat! Ah, this is my chance, I said to myself, to lay the foundations of my sanctification. This is the proper time; later, it will be too late."

The other seminarians were deeply impressed by the new student. They admired his regularity, his amiability, his piety. "Scarcely had Peter Chanel taken his place among us," wrote one of them, "than I was attracted by his angelic mien and longed to seek his company. Of all the students of his class he was the only one whom I knew intimately. I passed two years with him at Brou, and he helped me greatly by word and example." Father Perrodin, the superior,

said, "Though it had seemed to those who knew him at Meximieux and Belley that his faith could not become more lively, his piety more tender, his charity more active, his love of study more ardent, his character more amiable, at Brou we all admired the still higher development of his qualities and virtues."

Peter found life very sweet at the Seminary. "What could be easier," he wrote to a friend, "than what we do, day by day: to rise after seven hours of rest, and to consecrate the first fruits of the day to prayer and the hearing of Mass; afterward, to give some time to the study of dogma, moral theology, and Holy Scripture; to devote a few minutes to the examination of conscience, to receive the best of advice, to take our meals and our recreations at fixed hours —in one word, to follow the regulation of the house? To urge us on they use neither constraint nor threats; they have need only to inspire in us a deep love of Jesus Christ. And what abundance of grace comes to our aid! God grant that I may be faithful!"

At prayer his whole attitude betrayed intense fervor and close union with God. One day, following a custom of the Seminary, the director asked him to give an account of his morning meditation. Peter responded simply and candidly, explaining the method he followed, and revealing his faults, as well as his colloquies and resolutions. It did not occur to him that his account showed how far he had advanced in the way of perfection. His spirit of prayer and love of meditation had their source in an absorbing love of the Blessed Sacrament. An angelic devotion marked him at Mass and Holy Communion. Not that for him prayer was always easy. It was work, most important and often difficult; and recollection of spirit was a treasure to be jealously guarded. "Who can comprehend," he said one day to an intimate friend, "all that slight curiosity, a little raillery, an uncharitable word, a yielding to self love can produce of

opposition to grace and weakening of fervor, of distractions at prayer and distaste for it?"

After Peter's martyrdom Father Pernet, who had been his professor of dogmatic theology, noted down what he remembered of him as a student. Parts of his account are of great interest. "He adopted all the practices of devotion in use in the house. Not satisfied with scrupulously obeying the rules, he sought out other means of advancing in the way of the Lord. There was no devotional exercise, public or private, at which he was not first to appear; there was no pious association among the students in which he did not take part, of which he was not the very soul. Above all, he was distinguished by his tender love for our Blessed Mother. Many times each day he was to be seen kneeling before her altar, and no one who knew him was surprised when he entered a Society bearing her name. His piety was cheerful and perfectly natural. A face always smiling, affable manners, and an eagerness to oblige made him beloved by all.

"In his second year at the Seminary he was given charge of the chapel and sacristy. He responded zealously and devotedly to the confidence thus shown him, and found in his work as sacristan not only new duties to perform but new food for his piety. At any time he might be seen in the chapel decorating the altars or making the necessary preparations for Mass or Benediction, always with a devout air that testified to his lively faith. His eye and hand were everywhere, but with no sign of haste or nervousness. He moved about, but his heart rested quietly with his Lord.

"But in adorning his soul M. Chanel did not neglect the cultivation of his mind. Though not brilliant, his power of application, never weary, never discouraged, enabled him to do well in his classes."

Early in May, 1825, Peter had the joy of learning that within a few weeks he would receive tonsure and

Minor Orders. About to take the Lord for his portion forever, he fervently prepared for the great day. And when the vacations came, he said to himself, "I am now an ecclesiastic, so I must give good example at home, in the parish—everywhere!" So he said, and so he did.

Father Trompier was delighted to have his old pupils gather at his house, Sunday after Sunday, during their vacations. They discussed with him their studies, their hopes and their plans, and he talked to them of the Sacred Ministry and all its joys and consolations. Peter missed none of these reunions, for he deeply loved the old priest who had done so much for him; he revered his goodness and appreciated to the full the value of his long experience. What he was learning in theory at Brou, he saw practiced at Cras.

Peter's second and third years at the Seminary saw his piety deepen. He grew to be most delicately thoughtful for others. More than one of his old school fellows told in after years how when he first crossed the threshold of the Seminary, he found a young student, full of sweetness, who received him like an old friend, took him to the Chapel for the customary Adoration, and did not leave him until he was comfortably installed in his own room. Peter singled out by preference those who were most timid, seeming to do so by chance. Several students owed to him their perseverance in their vocation. "But for Peter Chanel," one said, "it is probable that I should not now be a priest. The first week I spent at the Seminary was a real nightmare; I was so sad, so bored, that I resolved to go away and return no more. Before I had a chance to carry out my resolution I happened to meet Peter Chanel in the corridor. He seemed to understand my state of mind. We walked up and down for a time, talking earnestly, and so wonderfully did he encourage me that I never again had a temptation of the sort."

There was another case, more extraordinary, of which Peter himself knew nothing. A priest who had lost his first fervor was sent by his bishop to spend some time at Brou in the hope that he might there become more worthy of his sacred calling. The students did not know the meaning of his sojourn among them; and Peter, eager to profit by the companionship of one who had had experience of the ministry, asked permission to see much of him. The unfortunate priest quickly found in the smiling, gentle youth the example and the stimulus he needed.

In February, 1826, his superiors decided that at the approaching ordinations Peter should be made sub-deacon. Overwhelmed with fear when he was told, Peter hurried to the chapel and knelt close to the tabernacle, asking God if it were indeed His holy will that he should vow himself entirely to His service. After praying for some time he consulted his director, as simply as a child; and when he learned that there could be no doubt as to God's will in his regard, he prepared for the great day with all the fervor of which he was capable.

The following May he was ordained deacon. Step by step he was nearing the goal of his heart's desire.

A little incident which occurred shortly after this has been preserved. On a certain feast day Peter, officiating as deacon, having received Holy Communion first, held the paten under the hand of the celebrant as he distributed the Bread of Life to the other students. A particle of a Sacred Host happened to fall to the floor and the young deacon noted the spot, hoping to find It after Mass; but his most careful search was fruitless, and he went to his room quite downcast. "How sad you look!" one of his friends exclaimed. "I have good reason," Peter replied; "I could not recover a particle which fell from a consecrated Host to the floor." Finding it impossible to keep his mind on the lesson of the day he went back to the chapel, and after praying for some moments

searched a second time. He found the particle, at last, and reverently placed It in a ciborium; then, going back to his friend, he exclaimed joyously, "I am happy now! I have found Him whom my heart loves."

On the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, July fifteenth, 1827, Peter was ordained priest. He had too deeply meditated on the almost infinite grandeur of the priesthood not to be penetrated with sentiments of faith, humility, love, and gratitude. God alone knows what ardor of love consumed his soul in the hour which made him a priest forever. If he had consulted only his own inclination, his first Mass would have been said in a quiet chapel with no one near except a priest to help him and a child to serve. But Father Trompier had claims upon him which could not be disregarded, so his first Mass was celebrated in the parish church of Cras. Every one in the village was present and all his relatives received Holy Communion from his hand. Father Trompier's joy knew no bounds. The little shepherd whom he had loved as a son was, at last, a priest of God.

CHAPTER V.

Ambérieux.

Father Chanel remained but a short time with his family. On the day of his ordination he had been appointed assistant to Father Colliex,[1] pastor of the pretty village of Ambérieux-en-Bugey, and he hastened to his new home, knowing well that he was sorely needed there, and eager to be at work. Long, close study had undermined his health, and far from improving, it became more and more frail; so, after thirteen months, Bishop Devie thought it well to send him elsewhere; but, short as was his stay at Ambérieux, it made an impression which many years did not efface. He was very fortunate first to exercise his sacred ministry under the guidance of a pastor of rare virtue and long experience. Ever afterward the memory of Father Colliex was dear to his heart, and the venerable priest loved his zealous assistant and leaned heavily upon him.

At Ambérieux Father Chanel had the happiness of being reunited to M. Claude Bret, whom he had known so intimately and loved so devotedly at Meximieux and Brou. Too young for ordination he had been appointed director of a school, and the friends were again closely associated, with the result that their longing for the religious and apostolic life received a new impetus.

[1] In his youth Father Colliex had been pastor of Lancrans. During the Terror he had remained with his flock, going, disguised, about the country, hearing confessions, giving Holy Communion, anointing the dying, and saying Mass in deep woods and even in caves.

Father Chanel began his work at Ambérieux by carefully regulating his own interior life, knowing that if he hoped to sanctify other souls, he must begin by sanctifying his own. Faithful to the spirit of the Seminary, he rose and went to bed at fixed hours; his prayers, the recitation of his office, his spiritual reading and other devotional exercises had each its appointed time. He tolerated no hint of luxury in anything belonging to him. In his room he had only a bed with a prie-dieu beside it, a Crucifix, and some religious pictures; in his study, a pine table, a simple bookcase, and a few chairs. He did everything for himself. No one was charged with the cleaning of his rooms or the care of his clothing. He did his own mending—more or less skillfully. One of his friends having surprised him, needle in hand, teased him about his new work. "It is a good thing," Peter replied, smiling, "to know a little about everything; and if I am ever a missionary among savages, I shall need to be able to dispense with tailors."

Very quickly he won the good will of the whole parish. When he preached for the first time, the noble simplicity and touching unction of his words moved all hearts. His hearers felt that his sermon had been carefully prepared under the eye of God; and as time went on, they became only more and more eager to hear him. Eight years later, a woman of Ambérieux said that she had never forgotten two of his talks: one, on the happiness of heaven, the other, on devotion to our Blessed Mother.

Though necessarily lacking in experience, Father Chanel had the prudence and wisdom which Holy Scripture calls the "science of the saints." Knowing that the direction of souls is "the art of arts," and a priest fresh from the Seminary not an enlightened guide, he mistrusted his own knowledge and constantly relied on the help of her whom the Church calls Seat of wisdom and Virgin most prudent. Without losing his natural affability, he acquired a certain reserve,

befitting a priest; all the while taking every opportunity of observing the character and customs of the people among whom God had placed him. He made it a rule always to act in unison with Father Colliex, whom he esteemed so highly that in all things he gladly followed his example and advice.

From the first, Father Chanel's confessional was besieged by penitents, and each of them congratulated himself on having chosen him for spiritual director. Children, especially, and young men loved to tell of his kindness and gentleness.

Father Colliex, appreciating the tact and holiness of his young curate, confided to him the direction of the sodality of "Les Filles de la Persévérance." In his intercourse with these young girls Father Chanel did much good, with a delicacy of prudence which he strictly exacted of himself. The piety of the sodalists at once became more fervent, and some among them began to aspire after high perfection. "I had the happiness of being one of 'Les Filles de la Persévérance' when the congregation was under Father Chanel's direction," a woman wrote later. "He often urged us to pray much and to flee the occasions of sin; he was never weary recommending devotion to the Blessed Virgin and frequentation of the Sacraments. He made us love virtue, holding it before us in the accomplishment of the duties of our state of life and in the most commonplace actions."

A little child, Peter had loved to build tiny altars which he decorated as best he could; a priest, he was better able to satisfy his love for his Eucharistic Lord. In preparing for feast days, and especially for Corpus Christi, he studied how he could best show forth all the richness and beauty of divine worship. With utmost care he directed the erection of altars at different points in the parish, where the King of Glory might pause in His procession through the streets, to bless His devout people. M. Bret helped him in these preparations for Corpus Christi, beautifully training

the children of his choir, and others who scattered flowers or carried censors.

May Devotions, now held everywhere, had not been begun in the parish of Ambérieux. Father Chanel loved them too much not to try to introduce them. After a little coaxing he obtained permission from Father Colliex, to whom all innovations were distasteful. "Do as you like," he said. "Make the devotions as attractive as you can. I leave all in your hands." Armed with this permission, Father Chanel elaborately decorated the chapel of the Blessed Virgin. The parishioners came in crowds to the opening exercises and Father Colliex himself presided. When he saw Our Lady's altar covered with flowers and ablaze with lights he was surprised by the extent of the preparations, and after returning to the presbytery he was not slow to voice his displeasure. "Truly," he scolded, "this is going too far! Why all this display? What more can we do for Easter?" But his first impressions gave place to intense satisfaction as the month of May wore on. He saw that neither a jubilee nor a mission could have done greater good.

Father Chanel's health had little chance of improvement in the midst of the constant work of Ambérieux; in fact, it failed noticeably. He became extremely pale and thin, and his weakness increased from day to day, arousing well founded fear in the hearts of those who loved him. "Ah, what a pity!" the people said; "Our dear Father Chanel cannot live long."

Frail as he was, he did not spare himself, but continued to preach in his turn, to teach the children their catechism, and to refuse no one who came to his confessional. One evening, exhausted after a day's hard work, he was preparing for bed when word came that a poor laborer had been seriously injured, and could live only a few minutes. Forgetting to put on his shoes, he flew to the dying man's side. M. Bret was not less prompt and zealous, and reached the place—a miserable garret—as soon as he. The man lay on

a bed of straw, mangled and bleeding and unable to speak, but retaining a glimmer of consciousness. He was a sinner who, for thirty years, had not approached the Sacraments. They exhorted him to repentance and to confidence in God, and soon tears began to flow from his eyes and he lovingly kissed the Crucifix held to his lips. Father Chanel had hardly time to anoint him before he breathed his last.

Thus did Peter wear himself out, forgetting that he was not robust. He gave his whole heart to every call of his sacred ministry. But, all the while, it seemed to him that deep down in his soul he heard a voice calling him to an even more sublime vocation, an abnegation more complete; he yearned for the Foreign Missions, that difficult field of which Father Loras had talked much and ardently. The attraction became so strong that he felt it his duty to open his heart to the bishop. Bishop Devie was slow to make any reply, and Peter calmly awaited his decision. A former curate of Ambérieux, Father Bonnard, by dint of prayers and entreaties, had obtained permission to go to India, and letters telling of his apostolic work there served to intensify Peter's desire. "If I cannot join Father Loras in the United States, how happy I should be to go to India!" he exclaimed. "I will start at once if God gives the sign."

When Bishop Devie's answer came it was not what Peter had hoped; he was made pastor of Crozet, a village at the extremity of the diocese, not far from Geneva. It was not thought that this parish, numbering hardly eight hundred souls, was worthy of Father Chanel; he was sent there in the interest of his health. Doubtless it would have cost Bishop Devie dear to have lost so good a priest from his struggling diocese, where priests were sorely needed; besides, it was necessary for him to be convinced that the attraction for the Foreign Missions was more than an idealistic longing; but satisfied as to the reality of such calls, he never held any of his priests. He had deep venera-

tion for the holy founder of the Society of Mary and, new-formed though his diocese was, few others gave so many missionaries to the Society of Mary in its early days.

THE PRESENT CHURCH AT BROU, FRANCE

CHAPTER VI.

Pastor of Crozet.

Father Chanel's appointment as pastor of Crozet dismayed and distressed Father Colliex. For several days he kept the news secret in the hope of having the order revoked. He had placed implicit confidence in Father Chanel and could not imagine how he would do without him in the work of the parish. But his supplications were unavailing. The inevitable had to be accepted, but what tears flowed in the presbytery and at every fireside! For Peter the voice of God had spoken, and despite his regret at leaving a village where he had done good and had been beloved, he made no complaint, but went joyously and confidently to the new post assigned him.

Crozet is a little, isolated village at the foot of the Jura Mountains, and not far from Geneva. At that time it had a modest church, surrounded by some small poor houses. A short distance away, in an arid spot deeply cut by ravines, were other groups of homes, and still farther from the church a few cottages clung to the mountain-side. An old Roman way cut through the country in the direction of Berne. Such was, topographically, the village of Crozet.

From a religious point of view it was even poorer than in worldly advantages. The disciples of Calvin had used it as an outpost from which they spread broadcast their errors. They had been strongly entrenched in the village, and as elsewhere, their domination had been the signal for deeds of cruelty whose story makes men shudder after hundreds of years.

Although the Catholics had rebuilt their church, some of the people were still Protestant, and among the faithful, what prejudice and what errors! What ignorance and what license! The nearness of Geneva whence came unceasingly the breath of heresy; young people, eighteen and twenty years of age, who had not made their First Communion; a constant influx of ex-criminals and workmen from no one knew where: such were some of the conditions Father Chanel found in Crozet. "At the time of his arrival," an old man related to Father Bourdin in 1841, "our parish was in the saddest possible state. No one went to confession. On Sundays and holydays the church was almost empty; some were working, as usual; others had gone to a dance, and the greater number were loitering about the saloon. Left to themselves, the children had no thought but for pleasure, and learned only evil. Our former pastor had been learned and zealous, but perhaps a little quick-tempered, and the people had taken so strong a dislike to him that they would listen to nothing that he said. They sent petition after petition, asking that he be removed, and at last Bishop Devie condescended to yield to their stubborn ill will. How good God is! Instead of punishing us, He sent Father Chanel to Crozet. The face of the parish was soon changed!"

The new pastor had indeed great obstacles to overcome, but he set to work determined to do everything possible for the reformation of the villagers, and full of confidence in Him who holds the hearts of all men in the hollow of His hand. As a beginning, he invoked the aid of Our Lady and of St. Francis de Sales, for nine days paying a special morning and evening visit to the Blessed Virgin's altar, and making a pilgrimage to the tomb of the great Bishop of Geneva. Realizing full well his utter impotence in the face of such difficulties as confronted him, he continued to put his whole confidence in prayer. He never mounted the altar steps, never said a Hail Mary, never even genu-

flected without reminding Our Lord of the needs of the flock committed to his care. Sometimes he passed whole hours at the feet of Her whom the Church invokes as Refuge of Sinners. Not satisfied with storming heaven alone, he asked the prayers of the nuns of several communities, begging that Crozet be remembered in their religious exercises, Holy Communions and austerities. He sent far and near to plead for the prayers of holy persons whom he knew to be zealous and generous.

On reaching the village, Father Chanel hastened to make the acquaintance of his parishioners. He went to their homes, neglecting no one, not even members of Protestant families. Everywhere he was received kindly, even joyfully. From time to time he repeated his visits, making a few every day. He did not wait to be sent for, but went unasked, though always tactfully choosing a favorable occasion—or making one, if necessary. From the first the hearts of the people were attracted by his bright face, his affectionate smile, the simplicity of his words and the modest dignity of his bearing. They recognized in this new pastor the face of a friend and the heart of a father. Each one of his parishioners might have quoted the words which St. Augustine used, speaking of St. Ambrose: "I began to love him, not because he taught truth, but because of the kindness and affection he showed me."

Father Chanel knew that effectually to remedy the evils of Crozet he must, first and last, concern himself with the instruction of the children. Having found a young man of solid piety and sufficient instruction, he won him to his cause and confided to him the little boys of the village. The young girls he placed under the supervision of a Sister of Providence, who was soon unable to instruct all the children who flocked to her, for she not only taught, but cared for the altar linens, decorated the church, visited the sick, and

performed other works of charity. Father Chanel soon saw that she must have a helper.

Mary Frances, his own dearly loved younger sister, was then twenty years of age. She was still at home, but longed for the religious life and even for work in a missionary country. It was impossible for her to enter a convent at the moment, and she begged her brother to allow her to join him in Crozet. After much thought, Peter decided that he could find no better assistant for the overworked Sister of Providence, and he bade her come. From the beginning the arrangement proved to be ideal. Mary Frances lived with the Sister, and helped in all the good works of the parish. Her piety and simple, friendly manner soon won the esteem and affection of all. She taught the little girls their catechism, and prepared them for confession and Holy Communion; she taught them to sew and to sing hymns. It was her delight to visit the sick and the very poor. Day after day she was to be seen with a basket on her arm, carrying food to the most needy families. She had charge of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary and of the girls' Sodality, and was able to impart to the members a little of her own fervor. All the mothers loved her. Charmed by her gentleness and sweetness they gathered about her on every holiday, only too happy to show their affection and their gratitude for all the good she was doing among their little ones. Mary Frances took advantage of her influence to say a word, now and then, about their duties to their children, and her advice, tactfully given, helped much towards the reformation of the village.

Having provided for the Christian education of the children, Father Chanel turned his attention to the most scandalous disorders of the parish; but while endeavoring to correct them, he forced himself to keep in mind the words of Holy Writ: "Wisdom reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly." He made it a rule never to say a

harsh word to any of his people; to every one he spoke as the kindest of fathers, and one and all felt that he loved the whole world. He often said, "The more we study the human heart, the more deeply are we convinced that there are sparks of virtue in the most depraved souls; and that the most wicked would be judged with less rigor, if we kept in mind the strength of passion and the force of adverse circumstances."

He saw that ignorance is religion's most dangerous enemy, and against it he directed his best efforts. He taught catechism several times a week to the children in the schools, and every Sunday, at Mass and again at Vespers, he preached to the handful of faithful ones who were present. How his heart was wrung, at first, because they were so few! Preaching in his church was little better than preaching in a desert. So, from house to house he went, trying to gather into the fold souls which could not be reached by his sermons. In these visits he did all that he could to dispel the people's ignorance and to show them how sweet and light is the yoke of the Lord. If he chanced to meet a peasant on the road, he would accost him in that irresistibly friendly way of his, and he never left such a one without having dropped some pious or enlightening word. Children, and above all the little shepherds, awoke within him the liveliest interest. Before he had been many days in Crozet, he knew each one by name. He liked to talk to them, instruct them, and give them medals or pictures of the Blessed Virgin. Having, by such means as these, succeeded in winning love and confidence, it became easy to prevail on one, and then another, to attend Mass, and apart from the graces showered upon them through the Holy Sacrifice, they heard an instruction on some fundamental truth. Numerous conversions followed to rejoice his heart.

Whenever he learned that one of his parishioners was ill, he hastened to his bedside, and by sympathizing with his suffering and talking freely of everyday

matters, won a way, little by little, into his heart, and then into his conscience. "I knew an old sinner in Crozet," related Father Bourdin, "whom Father Chanel converted during his long last illness. He often went to see the man, and never empty handed; he instructed him, and exhorted him to patience; and when the poor fellow was released from his suffering, he exclaimed feelingly, 'How that good man edified me! I hope that he is praying for me in heaven.'"

Father Chanel knew that the success of his work in Crozet depended much on the cooperation of M. Girod, mayor of the village, who had disliked his predecessor and taken a prominent part in having him removed. By tact and gentleness Father Chanel soon won his good will, even his friendship. M. Girod invited him to come often to the chateau, and contributed generously to the support of the church and schools and the fund for the relief of the poor. He returned to the practice of his religion, and occupied himself seriously with the thought of death. To Bishop Devie he said, "How can I thank you for having given us so good a pastor! The zeal and sweetness of St. Francis de Sales have come to life among us."

Nowhere did Father Chanel show greater charity than in the confessional. He received all with fatherly tenderness; and however long the confession or trying the penitent, he never lost patience. Each one felt himself to be the object of a very special care and interest. Nor did he ever put off until another day the confession of man or child.

Concluding that the reformation of the parish was too stupendous a task for him to accomplish alone, Father Chanel decided to have a mission given in Crozet. Some of his fellow priests tried to dissuade him from the project. "You will find," they said, "that people will be moved at the moment, but no lasting conversions will result." Far from agreeing with them, Peter believed the exercises of a retreat or mission to be a powerful means of winning sinners

and safely housing them within the fold. The mission given at Crozet was indeed blessed by Heaven! No cross was raised to commemorate it, but confraternities were established which long preserved its fruits.

In short, before Father Chanel had been many months in Crozet the place was transformed. Dances, public houses of ill-repute, the profanation of Sunday, and other scandals were all of the past. Certainly, a few held aloof, most of them Protestants. Among these there was a poor, feeble, old woman whom Father Chanel often visited and treated with extraordinary kindness, taking her meat and bread and wine, encouraging, cheering, and entertaining her. He longed to win her back to the Faith, and when it became evident that she could not live very long, he redoubled his tenderness and the number of his visits. But, to his sorrow, the woman died in heresy. "Ah," he exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "if she could only have now the graces she despised! I thought for many a day that, perhaps, she would return to the Church, but when she obstinately refused to invoke the Blessed Virgin, I lost hope."

Father Chanel's tireless energy and his effort by many means to improve the condition of his parish would have proved unavailing had he not used that most powerful means: good example. His goodness to the poor and the suffering, his patience, his gentleness, his reverence, and his love of prayer were sermons more eloquent than any words could possibly have been. His devotion to the welfare of the schools proved that the good of the little ones lay very close to his heart. But for him the children must have remained illiterate, for the council of the poor, little village could set aside no fund for educational purposes. The very moderate tuition fee paid by the parents hardly sufficed to support the boys' teacher. Still more precarious was the condition of the girls' department, especially in the beginning when Father Chanel, poor himself, divided each day's bread with

the Sister of Providence. Matters having come to such a pass that even bread was lacking, he begged from door to door. His zeal touched all hearts, and M. Girod took upon himself the support of both schools.

His love of the poor was beautiful to see; his goodness to them tender even as His who in Galilee went about doing good to all, the sick and the sinful, the unfortunate and the shiftless. Perhaps, following the example of St. Francis de Sales, Father Chanel had made a vow to help all the poor who appealed to him. Certainly he received with compassion every one who knocked at the door of the presbytery, and sent none away empty handed. When he had no money he gave food or clothing. If a man was cold or wet he made him sit close to the fire, and took advantage of this opportunity for a chat to drop some word of advice or encouragement. Many beggars, especially those of Crozet and its neighborhood, knew his boundless charity too well to fear to ask his help again and again. Needless to say, he was sometimes imposed upon. Told one day that a man to whom he had given alms was a professional beggar, wholly undeserving, he said placidly, "I am sorry, because such as he do harm to the worthy poor; as for me, I have lost nothing in God's sight."

In the interest of the needy he deprived himself of all but strict necessities. His cassock, shoes, and hat testified to this; his house was almost bare of furniture. He had found it in need of repair, but refused to spend on it more than was absolutely necessary. His meals were always frugal, and more than once it happened that he had none. In spite of these privations, which reduced his own expenses to a trifling sum, it is not easy to understand how he managed to do so much for the needy. Perhaps M. Girod's generosity offers the key to the riddle.

Everything that belonged to Father Chanel seemed to him less his own than the property of the poor.

One day his servant went to him in great distress of mind. "I don't know, Father," she said, "what happens to your clothing. Day by day your wardrobe becomes more nearly empty. I have just looked everywhere for your overcoat, and I cannot find it!" "Don't trouble yourself about it," he replied. "I hope God will not allow the things to be lost." "Until they turn up," she went on, "You had better buy others—though I doubt if you have enough money." "Now, don't worry," Father Chanel said, soothingly. "Only I am concerned, so I beg you to think no more about it." And under his breath he added, "Dear Lord, how many poor there are!" The last words were not meant for the servant's ears, but she heard them, and never again asked an explanation of the disappearance of Father Chanel's belongings.

A source of real sorrow to him on his arrival in Crozet was to find there a church badly placed and small, with cracked walls and miserably poor furnishings. The deplorable condition of the presbytery troubled him little: God's house was another matter. He did nothing hastily, but it was not very long before he broached the subject of a new church, and consulted his people about a suitable site for it—a question upon which it is often difficult to reach an agreement, especially in country districts. In time he appealed to his parishioners for the necessary funds. Even families of small means responded promptly and willingly, and the Bishop, M. Girod, and other people of note in the department promised hearty coöperation. But after sufficient money was assured, such difficulties arose as to the choice of a site that the project had to be temporarily abandoned. In fact, it was not until 1833, after Father Chanel had left Crozet for the College of Belley, that ground was broken. When he learned what location had been decided upon he thought it unsuitable, and wrote to his successor, "How unfortunate that your church is to be built above the village, and on a steep incline! If my tears could

wash it down, I would shed them in torrents." Too late the people of Crozet regretted that they had not followed his advice.

Obliged to be content with his poor church Peter consoled himself by remembering that Christ was born in a stable and passed thirty years in the humble home of a village carpenter. However, to reawaken the faith and piety of his people, and at the same time give God, in a suitable manner, the homage due Him, he repaired the church, beautified it as best he could, and celebrated the Sacred Mysteries with all possible pomp. "Thanks to his zeal," said an eye-witness, "the church at Crozet was transformed; it became one of the neatest and most devotional in that part of the country."

The loving nearness of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament was the joy of Father Chanel's life. It made him love his little church with a consuming love, which showed itself even in small and homely details. He could not tolerate the least trace of dirt or disorder there. Each week he swept the sanctuary and carefully dusted everything. A letter written to one of his friends in Ambérieux gives evidence of his zeal for the fitting celebration of the feasts of the Church and consequent increase of piety among the villagers. "We have just celebrated Corpus Christi, for which great preparations had been made. Foreseeing that a banner ordered in Lyons would not reach us in time, I set to work and made three: one of crimson velvet and two of white silk, and ornamented them as nicely as I could. Will you believe it? My good people were enchanted with the result of my work. The procession was very edifying, all taking part, and all most reverent. The houses were decorated with flags; the streets and paths were strewn with branches, with here and there an arch made of flowers and leaves."

But though Father Chanel was giving himself, heart and soul, to his work and the villagers loved and venerated him, his superiors, who had sent him to Crozet

only in the interest of his health, were thinking of placing him in charge of a more important parish. As he said, "They do not intend to leave me long in my dear Crozet. Father Ruivet, the vicar-general of the diocese, came to see me when I was away from home. He told one of the priests that he wished to offer me the parish of Douvres. Humanly speaking the place is attractive. But I am putting myself in God's hands and offering to Him the sacrifice of all that is pleasant. His will, not mine, be done! I doubt if I could leave my people here without real pain; I have found in their midst so many consolations! I will never part from them, I hope, but to go to work among the heathens. For many a day I have felt that God has that in store for me. Father Bret and Father Maitrepierre, now head of the boarding school at Marboz, are eager to be my fellow travelers. It is agreed that we three would willingly, more than willingly, follow Bishop Loras to the United States." But, convinced though his own heart was that God destined him for the Foreign Missions, Father Chanel waited week after week for Him to say, through the mouth of Bishop Devie, "God wills it, go!"

Considering Father Chanel's life only as it was seen by men, his holiness was not extraordinary. Many, many priests, engaged in work similar to his, perform it with equal zeal. It was the spirit which animated all he did that made the heavenly sweetness and beauty of his daily routine; a spirit which kept the thought of God always present, and made His will and His glory the sole object of his desire. Thus did he resemble the holy Curé d'Ars, his contemporary, also pastor of a small rural parish of the diocese of Belley. "I must strain every nerve," Father Chanel said, "to save those confided to my care; but what would it profit me to guide them to heaven, if I do not also save my own soul? Should I not be like a sign post which, always pointing out the way to travelers, never moves, but rots in the earth? Some day a storm sends

it to the ground, and it is picked up to be thrown into the fire."

Not stopping short at the virtues which make the good priest, Peter rose to those that make the perfect one. Bishop Devie and Bishop Depéry both testified to this. The latter said, "I saw him in the humble presbytery of Crozet, and later, a member of the Society of Mary, acting successively as professor, spiritual director and superior of the College of Belley. Afterwards, from afar, I watched his apostolic work in Oceania, with all the interest one feels in a fellow countryman and friend; and always and everywhere I found him the same: unpretentious in his habits, meek and humble of heart, making heroic sacrifices simply and unostentatiously."

As a means to perfection, Father Chanel mapped out for himself a line of conduct from which he never deviated. Day after day he was exact about his prayers, his particular examen, spiritual reading, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin's altar. Besides making the yearly diocesan retreat, he set apart one day in every month as a day of recollection, and found the practice so beneficial that he recommended it to all aiming at perfection. He never allowed more than two weeks to pass without going to see his confessor. Knowing that without mortification it is impossible to make real progress, he sternly refused himself all that pampers the body or enervates the soul. He slept little and on a hard bed, rising long before his parishioners and giving to prayer the first hours of the day, the only ones he could call his own. His meals were always frugal, and to the fasts commanded by the Church he added others: the Saturday of every week and the eves of Our Lady's principal feasts. He wore habitually an iron belt lined with sharp points. For everything contrary to the spirit of poverty he had real repugnance, and more than once reproached himself with having accepted the gift of a small ivory figure of Christ. "I am afraid that it

is luxurious of me to keep it," he said. 'I would give it away were it not enriched with indulgences."

He never permitted himself to be idle for a moment. Small as was his parish, he was always busy in the house, church, or school, or among the poor and the sick. He was so careful to lose no time that if he went to see any one living at a distance, he said his beads or read some book, as he walked along the road. But with all his love of work, he was never impatient of interruption. A caller was always welcome; no bore was ever a bore.

Visits from the priests of neighboring towns were a joy to him, and one he often had, for all loved to go to his poor little house, certain of a cordial reception and stimulating companionship. But Father Chanel's friendship for them did not crowd Father Colliex from a place in his heart. Full of gratitude towards the holy old priest, he wrote to him regularly. Once while he was at Crozet, he was surprised and delighted by a visit from Father Colliex.

Not long afterward Father Chanel spent a short time at Ambérieux, and from there he went to Cuet. "Thanks be to God," he wrote, on returning to Crozet, "I found all my relatives well. My visit was a real joy to them. After leaving home I went to Cras, as dear to me as my own father's house. When from a distance I saw the presbytery and the church tower, my eyes filled with tears. Both reminded me of the most signal graces of my life. A little farther on, I came to the fields where, a child, I tended my father's sheep. I saw the spot where God called me, as He did the boy David, to make me a shepherd of souls. Absorbed by these thoughts I walked slowly, so slowly that it was late when I reached Father Trompier's house. It is to that venerable priest, after God, that I owe the happiness of being a priest; it was he who providentially met me when I was a little shepherd, and who charged himself with my education. Oh, but I did embrace him with a full heart! And how

swiftly the hours passed while I was with him! I had the joy, before I left, of kneeling in the spot where I made my First Communion, and of saying Mass at the altar at which I celebrated the Divine Mysteries for the first time."

At the close of this letter he spoke again of his ever growing yearning for the Foreign Missions. "Father Bret joined me at Brou, and together we went to Marboz to see our dear friend, Father Maitrepierre. We consulted together as to what means we should take to hasten the moment when we should be free to leave all and hurry away to the poor savages."

To his desire for the Missions, that of the religious life was soon added. "In July, 1831," related Father Bernard, a relative of his, "I visited Peter at Crozet. He was cordial and affectionate as only he could be. I remember that he recalled many little incidents of our early childhood and of our school days at Cras. While our talks were always easy and friendly, and I could open my whole heart to him, in his presence I always had a feeling of awe. I knew him to be my superior in wisdom and virtue; besides, he had been my mentor at Cras and Meximieux.

"In the course of our conversation that day, some words of his gave me to understand that he was thinking of a manner of life more in accordance with the aspirations of his soul. I remember I teased him a little about his monkish tendencies. He only smiled, and said, 'And if I become a monk or a religious, will you love me less?' I replied that I should always love Peter Chanel, but no dignity he might ever reach could add to my friendship. Then, speaking more seriously, Peter said we must hold ourselves ready to enter, with closed eyes, in the way God points out.

"Two weeks later he returned my visit, coming to Ferney where I had been a professor for several months. He found himself to be of one mind with Father Crétin, pastor of Ferney and president of the college, who had, after long deliberation, determined

to devote the remainder of his days to the Foreign Missions. He was preparing himself by mortifications and a rule of life which we thought excessively severe. Peter and he strengthened each other in their longing for apostolic work in a distant land: I knew, because on leaving, Peter spoke rapturously of the happiness of belonging entirely to God and our neighbor by sacrifice and renouncement; and that evening Father Crétin said that he was happy to have come in contact with so beautiful and priestly a soul."[1]

Father Chanel had been pastor at Crozet for three years when he made another effort to obtain permission from Bishop Devie to join Bishop Loras in the United States. The thought of the Missions was giving him no rest. "I seem to see," he said, "the poor savages whom the devil is claiming for his own. They are stretching out their arms to us. I think I hear them say, 'Who will bring light into our darkness? Who will break the chains of sin that bind us? Come to our aid! Teach us your Faith! Come, close for us the gates of hell and open those of heaven!' "

Bishop Devie took Father Chanel's apostolic vocation into serious consideration. He asked for time before giving his reply, but he was not discouraging. He advised patience, at the same time praising the zeal that so longed for the salvation of heathens. Far from mourning over this delay, Father Chanel was convinced that it hid some design of Providence. He thought that God wished of him a more intrepid spirit of sacrifice and higher sanctity. His desire for the religious life was growing apace with that for the Missions, and he often said to himself, "When God wills it, I shall be both apostle and religious."

Having determined to become a religious, the question arose, what Order he should join, keeping in view the work of the Foreign Missions. There were, of course, the great Orders: the Dominican, the Fran-

[1]Not long after this Father Crétin came to the United States, and in time became first bishop of St. Paul.

ciscan, the Benedictine, the Society of Jesus, and others which, through long centuries, had produced saints and done inestimable service to the Church; there were newer congregations, born after the Revolution, but already grown strong and rivalling the old in holiness and devotedness. There were active and contemplative Orders. While Father Chanel reverenced them all, not one forcibly attracted him.

But there was a new Society[1] little and humble, an infant still in swaddling clothes, whose simplicity and humility won his heart. The idea of this new congregation had been conceived in 1816, at the Seminary of Saint-Irénée, in Lyons; it was born at the feet of the Blessed Virgin in the old church of Fourvière. The Queen of Heaven had given it her name, thereby adopting it for Her own.

The members of this Society called themselves Marists, and recognized Mary as their Mother and perpetual Superior. They were few in number, but among them there were several who had been schoolmates of Father Chanel's; and he knew intimately Father Colin[2] founder of the society, who at that time directed, under the authority of Bishop Devie, the parochial missions of the diocese of Belley.

Father Chanel went to see Father Colin, told him of the thoughts that filled his mind, and the longings that burned within his heart, and after further reflection, much prayer, and advice from those whom he trusted most, he begged to be admitted into the Society. Father Colin received him with fatherly tenderness.

[1]The Society of Mary now has six provinces; two in France, one in the British Isles, one in the United States, one in New Zealand and one in Oceania, and numbers among its members about a thousand priests and many lay-brothers.

[2]Venerable John Claude Mary Colin was born in 1790 and died in 1875. The idea of a Society dedicated to the Blessed Virgin originated among the seminarians at Saint-Irénée. Although the most retiring of the group, he became its leader, and drew up provisional rules. From Bishop Devie he obtained permission to take a few companions, and to preach missions in the neglected parts of the diocese. The Society grew rapidly, was canonically approved by Gregory XVI, and entrusted with various missions in Oceania, to which Father Colin sent as many as seventy-four priests and forty-three lay-brothers.

THE VERY REV. FATHER COLIN
FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Another appeal was made to Bishop Devie, and this time he gave the desired permission. Father Chanel's joy knew no bounds.

But few heaven-made plans succeed without overcoming opposition. A religious vocation is a grace so great and so precious that God ordinarily demands that it be bought with sacrifice. His affection for Crozet became a sword in Father Chanel's affectionate heart; and like many others, he had to withstand the importunities of friends and relatives. The members of his family felt that they would lose him forever, and grieved deeply; but they were too sincerely good to refuse any sacrifice demanded by God. Among his friends he had to fight against many objections, some of them plausible enough. In his own parish no one knew anything of his intentions until the end.

Before leaving Crozet, Father Chanel wished his sister's future to be settled. Following her own inclinations and his advice, Mary Frances went to Belley and sought admission to the convent of Bon-Repos, mother house of the Religious of the Holy Name of Mary. She was received and, a mere postulant, became angelically devout, obedient, and humble. In time she took the veil, and received the name, Sister St. Dominic. At Crozet many tears were shed over her departure. The villagers little suspected that a still sadder separation was to come. But though Father Chanel said nothing of his plans, he could not entirely conceal his secret. The nearer came the hour he was to leave his dearly loved parish, the more did his people remark the sadness of his ordinarily happy face; and they were amazed when he stripped his house and distributed his furniture among the poor.

"The last Sunday he spent at Crozet," a priest related, "he consecrated the parish to the Blessed Virgin. After Vespers and the recitation of the beads, he intoned the canticle, 'We fly to thy patronage,' in a voice full of emotion. As he sang, tears flowed over his cheeks. Afterwards, he spoke a few words on

devotion to Mary and conformity to the will of God. The evening of that same day he went to the chateau to say good-byè to M. Girod and commissioned him to express his loving regret to his people. At the close of this visit, he got into a carriage and drove away alone into the night. Undoubtedly, if his parishioners had known of his departure, it would have been opposed."

The next morning the news plunged all Crozet into deep grief. The people wrote to Father Chanel, imploring him to return, but touched though he was, his resolution was unshakable. "What consoles me," he wrote to them, after the installation of his successor, "is that I leave you in the hands of a priest who will strengthen your souls in good, and whose zeal will repair my faults and negligences."

His letter closed with a plea for their prayers, some touching words of adieu and a little good advice: all in the language of a father speaking, heart to heart, to his children. He loved Crozet too much to forget it. Ever afterward, in France and across the sea, the village and its needs held their place in his prayers. He liked to talk about it, to be reminded of it. And in Crozet his name is enshrined. Fathers tell their sons about him; mothers love to talk of him to their daughters. He remains for all an example of everything holy. More than once the mention of his name strengthened the people to generous sacrifices; for example, seven years after he went away, when he was already in Futuna, Father Levret, his successor, undertook to establish in Crozet a branch of The Propagation of the Faith. Seeing, to his sorrow, that his plea was arousing no interest, he said sadly, "Ah, my brethren, how disappointed I am! In many places this Society is the sole support of the mission; consequently, Father Chanel is vitally interested in it. From the distant island where he labors he unites his voice to mine, begging the help of your prayers and your alms. After all he did for you, I thought you loved

him more than this!" Many of his hearers were moved to tears, and all hastened to enroll themselves as members of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

CHAPTER VII.

First Years in The Society of Mary.

When Father Chanel joined the Society of Mary, it was engaged in only two works: the giving of missions, principally in neglected country places, and the management of the College of Belley which, not long before, had been placed in Father Colin's hands by Bishop Devie. He was assigned to the college and given a class of little boys, a kind of work for which he had had no preparation. There is a great difference between the direction of a parish, however humble, and the management of a class of children; and, so employed, how was he ever to realize his long cherished dream of the Foreign Missions, for which he had sacrificed all else? Father Chanel asked himself no such question. His superior had spoken; like a good religious he obeyed, certain that in obeying he fulfilled God's will. He did even better, and thought himself honored to be placed over a band of the little ones for whom Our Lord has such special love. They reminded him of the ragged peasants of Crozet, to whom he had taught catechism, and he loved them as he had loved his wild little villagers. To their religious instruction he gave very special care. He had the knack of drawing beautiful and ennobling thoughts from sources which others would have found dry, and of arousing in the hearts of his boys, enthusiastic admiration for the heroism of really great men and of God's saints. On their part, the children, ordinarily restless and inclined to be lazy, worked hard in their eagerness to please him.

Remembering his own not very distant boyhood, Father Chanel knew that it is natural for the young to learn far more through their eyes than their ears; that they are guided by example, rather than by sermons, and he watched his own conduct most closely, aiming to be not only a good professor, but above all, a perfect priest, whose every word and least action would be above reproach even in the keen eyes of the children.

He was often to be found on the playground during hours of recreation. As soon as he appeared the boys would run to him, instinctively attracted by the gentleness and amiability which, all his life, won such tender affection. His presence added zest to the games, prevented incivility and roughness and the little quarrels which so easily arise among children constantly thrown together. He was always willing to help or to replace an overworked prefect, and his watchfulness made him an invaluable assistant. "I love the children as if they were angels," he said, "and mistrust them as if they were demons."

His relations with each member of the community were marked by deep affection and delicate consideration. Some of them chose him for spiritual director, and these he urged to pray—to pray always for the students, especially to the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and their Guardian Angels. Every week he gave a conference to the community, usually choosing as subject some ceremony of the Church.

But he was doing too much. Reminded that he was not robust and advised to moderate his zeal, he paid but little heed and gave himself no rest until his health broke so seriously that all were alarmed. Pain in his chest, slight hemorrhages, and extreme weakness at last confined him to bed. The boys of his class were distressed. Every morning they asked for news of him, and prayed with childish fervor for his recovery. All begged to be allowed to help about the infirmary, and at each recreation they took turns in going to see

him and keeping him company for a while. Rest and tender nursing did their work. Little by little his strength returned, and he was able to go back to his class and to keep it until the close of the scholastic year.

Young as he was, Father Chanel had already shown unusual aptitude for the guidance of souls, so it is not surprising that after his first year spent in the class room, his superior appointed him spiritual director of the college. When the students returned in October he took up this new work. Having a deep sense of the value of every Christ-bought soul, his duties seemed to him difficult, though beautiful; but nature, grace, and experience had given him that sweetness which, as Bossuet said, "Carries with it three virtues absolutely necessary in those who direct souls; patience, to put up with faults; sympathy, to compassionate them; condescension, to cure them." Father Chanel himself said, "The spiritual father of any community should be not a man, but an angel. Confident of every fault, even of those that escape the vigilance of prefects and teachers, he has a chance to check evil tendencies before they grow strong. He can prevent and reprove not only exterior faults, but because he sees secret thoughts and desires, can cure the most hidden wounds. He forms the consciences of the children, points out to them their faults, teaches them how to conquer them, and gives the necessary strength through the grace of the Sacraments. It is he who must awaken and develop vocations to the priesthood and guard them against all that might tarnish or stifle them."

As was customary in the diocesan colleges, a retreat was given to the students soon after the opening of the school year. Father Chanel was overjoyed by its results. "Our retreat has just closed," he wrote. "It produced splendid fruit. We had the consolation of seeing the confessionals besieged with fervent penitents, and with what piety our boys approached the

Holy Table! They have now set to work with earnestness and are so docile that it is a delight to be among them. Several came to tell me how happy they were and I could not help weeping for joy."

That the excellent dispositions produced by the retreat might be lasting Father Chanel obtained permission from Father Colin to establish in the school the Sodalities of the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Angels. He remembered too well the good they had accomplished at Meximieux not to be eager to see them flourish at Belley. The result was all he had dared to hope. "Our young sodalists," he wrote some time later, "have their own little oratory and are interested in beautifying it. It is there that I gather them once every week to do all that I can to keep alive their fervor. Please do not forget them in your prayers. Here we look upon the two congregations as a stroke of Providence."

The Blessed Virgin's Sodality had for prefect, George Vibert, a rhetorician, hardly fifteen years of age, but angelically good and pious. Young as he was, he showed real love of prayer, mortification and humiliations and longed for the day when, a priest of the Society of Mary, he might leave all for some distant mission among a heathen people. Father Chanel loved this soul, so like his own. "Who knows, George, but that some day we may go together," he used to say. But the lad did not live long. Before the end of his first year of theology he was sent home very ill and died in January, 1837. If all the sodalists were not as edifying as George Vibert, at least all gave evidence of hearty good will and went frequently to confession and Holy Communion.

As spiritual director of the college it was Father Chanel's duty to preach often in the chapel, and he prepared each instruction with utmost care. His respect for the word of God, so marked when, as a student at Meximieux and Brou, he had listened reverently to every sermon, had but deepened with the

passing of the years, and he always spoke from the pulpit with a simplicity and unction which touched the hearts of his hearers and strengthened their wills to do whatever God might ask of them. To the boys at Belley he insisted much on man's obligation of serving God from the days of his youth. Our Heavenly Father, he would say, is jealous of the first fruits of our hearts; and, ordinarily, faithfulness in youth means faithfulness to the end. Because life looks long to the young, he tried to impress upon their minds its uncertainty and the swiftness of its passing. "Do not forget that we are walking toward eternity," he said to them one day. "A few years more, perhaps, only a few months—who knows? And the time for merit will have passed, and eternal reward or eternal punishment will have begun."

But if he knew how to inspire fear of death and judgment and hell, he liked best to make love triumph over fear, by arousing boundless confidence in God's love and His tender mercies. He wished the students entrusted to his guidance to think habitually of God, less as a severe judge than a most loving father; he could not conceive how a soul could serve so sweet a Lord more through fear than love.

But however efficacious sermons are to enlighten, instruct, and strengthen souls, they cannot enter into the details of each hearer's life. Differences in age, intelligence, natural disposition, and state of soul make a more individual direction necessary: and this can best be given in the Sacrament of Penance. Towards children and young men, the confessor needs to be not only doctor, judge, and father, but a loving mother, as well, and Father Chanel had a truly maternal heart for each one of his penitents. Nearly all of the students chose him for confessor. He never hurried or slighted even the smallest children, and contrary to a custom all too prevalent at the time, did not wait until the eve of their First Communion to give them abso-

lution. He was the confessor, too, of most of the teachers and of the servants of the house.

Direction, given in confidential talks in his room, supplemented his work in the confessional, and was productive of hardly less good. Two or three instances have been preserved which illustrate its effectiveness. A student who, during the preceding year had taken first prizes, fell lower and lower in his class until he ranked with the laziest and most stupid. The prefect had the happy thought of recommending him to Father Chanel, to whom he said, "Have a special care over that child; his mind is ill at ease because his conscience needs to be set in order." So well did Father Chanel succeed that soon the boy was again at the head of his class.

An older student, against the rule of the college, had received a bad book. Father Chanel learned this and at once sent for him. As the young man afterwards related, he refused to give up his book until he was so earnestly besought that his heart was touched by the priest's solicitude and zeal, and he sacrificed it willingly.

But zealous as he was, Father Chanel urged none of the students to a degree of perfection which God did not seem to require of him. The greater number were destined, not for the priesthood, but to live in the world; and for these it sufficed that they should be faithful in essentials. He aimed to uproot their evil tendencies, and to inspire a love of duty strong enough to enable them, in after years, to stand firm amid the temptations certain to assail them.

Father Chanel was not content with devoting himself only to the souls of those sheltered within the school; he directed, also, many others whom God sent to him in various ways. Sometimes he had the joy of reclaiming a sinner; sometimes a priest would make a retreat under his guidance, and often he was called to a hospital across the street from the college, where

God's work was white for the harvest. Many a night his sleep was interrupted by a call to attend the sick.

One patient was for months under his care, a poor unfortunate who was subject to attacks of insanity in which he sometimes became so violent that the attendants were obliged to bind him and put him in a padded cell. When the man was sane he displayed every evil passion and spoke only blasphemy. Father Chanel, thirsting to gain his soul for God, applied to the convent of Bon-Repos for the prayers of the nuns, and then began to go often to see him, taking gifts and delicacies. Little by little he won the man's heart; he instructed him and received him into the Church; and when the end came the poor fellow died peacefully.

During the vacation following Father Chanel's first year as spiritual director of the college, he had the joy, the unhoped-for joy, of going to Rome. At that time—1833—the Society of Mary had been in existence for seventeen years, and Father Colin believed that the moment had come to submit to the Pope an account of its spirit and its works and to beg his approbation of them. He consulted Cardinal Macchi, then nuncio at Paris, who advised him to go to Rome, assuring him that the approbation of the Holy See would be given readily, if it was desired by the Bishops of Lyons and Belley. At once Father Colin appealed to both bishops for letters which he might present at Rome; they gave them gladly, and the Bishop of Grenoble begged to be allowed to add his commendation to theirs. These letters obtained, Father Colin drew up an address to Gregory XVI, and had it signed by the seventeen priests who formed the Society. This address, dated August twenty-third, 1833, gave a summary of the rule of the new institute, which proposed to comprise, in time, priests, lay-brothers, sisters and a third order. To one who was surprised by the vastness of the plan about to be submitted to the Holy Father, Father Colin thus explained his purpose: "The object of my trip is only to get advice about our enter-

prise and to fulfill a vow I made long ago, to work at it until it has been submitted to the Sovereign Pontiff. I have, in the opening lines of my address, said emphatically that there is now no question on the approbation of the Society; that, later, we will present a more detailed rule; that, at present, we seek only the advice and the approbation of the Holy See for the continuation of the enterprise."

Father Colin chose Father Bourdín and Father Chanel for his companions, and the three set forth on the twenty-sixth of August, the day the college closed. They began their journey with a pilgrimage to Fourvière, dearly loved as the cradle of their Society. On August fourth they embarked at Marseilles on a brig called "Madone de Bon-Secours." As they left port two vessels a short distance ahead of theirs collided, damaging them so seriously that both were unable to proceed on their way. "We need fear no disaster," Father Chanel said; "Our ship belongs to the Blessed Virgin." The voyage was, indeed, made without accident, but it was not until the fifteenth of September that the party reached Rome.

Their first visit was to St. Peter's. After having satisfied his devotion by praying for some time, Father Chanel admired the vastness of the great Cathedral of Christendom, and the treasures enshrined within it. "The church dedicated to my patron saint is indeed worthy of him," he remarked, with a smile. The next morning he said Mass at the Confession of St. Peter, and afterwards, impelled by love of his patron, he went to the Mamertine prison and Mount Janiculum.

His visits to the catacombs of St. Sebastian and St. Lawrence filled his soul with awe and joy, and surely it was but fitting that he should drink deeply of the sweetness of treading the ground hallowed by the feet of many destined to be martyred and of praying close to the tombs of those who long, long ago shed their blood for Christ. "To make a retreat here one would need the help of neither book nor preacher," he said

enthusiastically. "Every step suggests holy memories; the very air is sweet with the perfume of faith and piety; it is impregnated with the blood of martyrs."

He did not forget St. Aloysius of Gongaza, whose name he had chosen when he was about to be confirmed. He said Mass on the tomb of his patron and prayed there particularly for the students of Belley, to whom he had often recommended the boy saint as patron and model. And, ever mindful of his dear Sodalities, before he left Rome he had them affiliated to those of the Roman College, that his boys might share in the privileges which various Popes had lavished on the Roman confraternities.

He loved Rome—loved it intensely. As he said, in the Eternal City he breathed everywhere the perfume of devotion to Mary. It rejoiced his heart to see her image in all the houses and sometimes even on the exterior; and he was even more deeply impressed to behold the beauty and magnificence of the churches which Roman piety had raised to honor her under her sweetest and most consoling titles. It made him happy, too, to pray in churches where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for Forty Hours Devotion. "In France," he said sadly, "we have Forty Hours but once a year. If, following the example of Rome, it could be made perpetual in our great cities, what graces countless souls would reap, and what reparation might be made to Our Lord for the outrages to which He is subjected in the Sacrament of His love."

But the piety which attracted Father Chanel to every spot hallowed by the blood of martyrs, or rich in association with some great servant of God, did not crowd out all desire to see works of art and places of historic interest. He visited galleries and public buildings in the time left him after he had satisfied his devotion, and had given a part of each day to the service of his superior. He acted as Father Colin's secretary, accompanied him when he was obliged to make visits, and to spare him fatigue, attended to all business mat-

ters in which Father Colin's presence was not indispensable.

On reaching Rome the little band of Marists had taken to Cardinal Macchi the letters they had brought with them, and he had charged himself with presenting them to the Holy Father. But so many were clamoring for audiences that they feared it would be impossible for them to obtain one. Father Chanel told Cardinal Macchi of their deep regret at this, and the kindly prelate said, "Do not grieve. I shall ask His Holiness to grant my dear Marists an audience." Thanks to his intercession in their behalf, Gregory XVI received them on September twenty-eighth. That same day Father Chanel wrote, "Our audience lasted nearly three quarters of an hour. I could never tell you all that I felt. I seemed to be in a dream. After leaving the Vatican we went to a nearby church and said the Te Deum and the Magnificat in thanksgiving for the great favor we had received." In blessing them the Holy Father had said, "Increase and multiply and spread over all the earth," and the zealous Marists kept these words in their hearts and prayed for their accomplishment, for God's greater glory and the honor of His Holy Mother.

When he learned that he was to go to Rome, Father Chanel had written to a friend in Ambérieux, "How happy I shall be if I have a chance to make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loretto! What heavenly sweetness must fill the Holy House of Nazareth! After having seen with my own eyes the humble home of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I should have within myself an inexhaustible subject for meditation; I should profit by it for others, above all for our college of Belley, and later, I hope, in some distant mission. It would be a powerful means of awakening in souls Christian faith and piety." His wish was destined to be fulfilled. The vacation of the Roman court interrupted all business, and the three Marists at once set forth for Loretto, reaching there on the feast of the Holy Rosary,

when church and village were thronged with pilgrims, poor people most of them, who had come from every direction, and displayed a loving, childlike devotion which it warmed the heart to see.

Father Bourdin afterwards related, "As soon as Peter Chanel saw, not the Holy House itself, but only the basilica which encloses it, he seemed to be moved to the depths of his soul. On entering the church he threw himself on his knees before the Blessed Sacrament and remained for a long time lost in adoration; afterwards, he made on his knees the round of the Holy House. For an hour he remained, wrapt in prayer, before the statue of the Blessed Virgin. We who knelt beside him could understand a little from his sighs and the expression of his face how deeply he had entered into the contemplation of the mysteries wrought in that sacred spot. We recited the beads together, and with what fervor he pronounced each time the words, 'Hail Mary,' kneeling in the very place where the Archangel Gabriel saluted Our Mother as full of grace! More than once, before we left, he went back to that hallowed spot."

"On leaving Loretto," continued Father Bourdin, "We parted from Father Colin who was shortly to return to Rome. Our work at the College of Belley was calling us home. We had but three weeks more of vacation, which we were permitted to spend in visiting some interesting cities of northern Italy. None of the discomforts and inconveniences we had to put up with as we traveled seemed to annoy Father Chanel. He was always the same; nothing ruffled his amiability. His prayers, office, examination of conscience, spiritual reading, and the saying of his beads had each its appointed time from which he never deviated."

The two priests reached Belley on the eve of All Saints Day, and Father Chanel at once resumed his work as spiritual director of the college, a position which he filled until the following summer, with a zeal and sweetness which our Blessed Lady herself must have lent him.

Belley. – Vue générale.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF BELLEY

CHAPTER VIII.

Superior of The Preparatory Seminary of Belley.

The Society of Mary grew rapidly, and it soon became necessary accurately to define its work and to complete its constitution. Father Colin felt that to do this he must lay aside all other work, and live, for a time, alone with God. On retiring into solitude he appointed Peter Chanel to succeed him as superior of the preparatory seminary of Belley. He had watched him at work and knew his admirable qualities of mind and heart, so it was without anxiety that he placed so much responsibility upon him, and the result justified his choice.

Obliged to accept a position from which his humility made him shrink, Father Chanel resolved to do his best to fill it perfectly. Aiming to avoid the confusion which often attends the opening of a big school he announced, as soon as the students returned, that from the very beginning the rules would be in full force. "Boys," he added, "we will do all in our power to make the college a second home to you. We wish you to find here affection and happiness; we hope to see your souls expand and grow strong. But that nothing will cross you; that you will never have to do violence to yourselves; that you will have nothing to endure; that the paths of learning and of virtue will be without thorns—these things would be impossible. School life is an apprenticeship for the struggles of later life. Accustom yourselves, in advance, to suffering."

After the Mass of the Holy Ghost, which prefaced the year's work, Father Chanel consecrated the students to the Blessed Virgin and placed under her protection their study, their recreation, and their rest. Every evening for several weeks he spent some time in explaining the rules of the house and urging all to do their best.

A letter which M. Modelon wrote many years later to Father Bourdin gives a lifelike portrait of Father Chanel as he was in those days. "I had the happiness of being a pupil at Belley when Father Chanel was superior," he said. "All who knew him remember his kindness, his unaffected sweetness, his gentle firmness, his intelligence, and his boundless charity. I have never heard any one equal the warmth and fervor with which he preached in the chapel, nor the grace of mind that showed itself in his familiar talks in the study hall and class rooms.

"If he crossed the playground when games of every kind were in progress all were dropped for the moment, and every boy ran to him, eager to talk with him, or perhaps to prevail upon him to take part in some game.

"There was great delicacy, but no affectation, in his voice and manner, a certain nobility in his carriage. He was all simplicity, candor, and fatherly tenderness. His calm, pure, pale face mirrored the beauty of his soul. His eyes were large, his glance was sweet and penetrating, his smile gentle and affectionate; his appearance instantly attracted all hearts to him.

"If I speak thus of one whom I believe, and always did believe, to be one of God's elect, it is partly because I knew him from another point of view: he was my confessor, and more than once I saw tears flow from his eyes as I told my sins. And what kindness when I was done! What tenderness toward my childish soul, for which, no doubt, he foresaw many struggles and many failures on life's sad way."

As superior, Father Chanel considered himself custodian of the rules of the school and guardian of every soul, responsible for the observance of the one and the safe-keeping of the other. That he might set good example he never broke the least regulation or was absent from any public exercise; the only prerogatives of his office of which he availed himself were the obligation of edifying and the opportunity of serving one and all. Once a week, or oftener, if it seemed necessary, he called together the professors and questioned them about the affairs of the school. To their reports he listened attentively, making suggestions in a modest, considerate way. Sometimes the young teachers became discouraged in their work among lazy, troublesome little boys. Father Chanel knew how to revive their courage and reanimate their zeal. "You know well," he would say, "that seed does not sprout the moment it is sown; a tree grows for many a day before it bears fruit; and it is the same with the cultivation of souls. Often we work and see no result; nevertheless, good is being accomplished."

His many cares did not cause him to overlook the servants of the house, whose welfare was very dear to him. He gained their affection by his gentleness and his eagerness to make their work as light as possible. He taught them to sanctify each menial task by doing it for God's greater glory. "When I was ill he came regularly to hear my confession and bring me Holy Communion," an old servant loved to tell, years afterwards. "When the doctor would have forgotten me, he reminded him. But for him what would have become of me during that long illness! They say that without charity we cannot be saved. Ah, he had it! How kind he was! Never was there another superior like him!"

Accessible to all, and at all hours, Father Chanel was frequently interrupted at his work, but he always turned from it and went back to it without showing, in his smiling face or placid manner, any trace of

weariness or vexation. When worn out by fatigue, as often happened, for he was never strong, the only rest he allowed himself was to sit before his Crucifix, praying silently with his eyes fastened upon it. Prayer had become habitual to him. He prayed every spare moment and in all difficulties; when he worked or talked his heart rested within the tabernacle. If a boy fell ill he increased the number of his visits to the Blessed Sacrament; if the finances of the house were causing anxiety he had recourse to St. Joseph, provider for the Holy Family, and burned a candle in his honor.

When it was necessary to find fault he did so firmly, but kindly. Indeed, kindness and sweetness were the foundation of his character. Because he was always smiling, some feared he was too lenient to make a fit head of a boys' college. These had failed to understand that the strength which can be always patient, always calm, insures a just, firm rule.

While Father Chanel was superior of Belley, Father Trompier died. He wept long and bitterly over the news and prayed much for the repose of his soul. And Father Trompier's death was but a beginning of sorrows. Soon another blow fell, one that was wholly unexpected. As his father was going home one evening he had a stroke of apoplexy and fell into a ditch full of water where he was found dead. How Father Chanel's heart ached! What tears he shed! And for the moment it was impossible for him to go home. He went, however, to the convent of Bon-Repos and broke the news to his sister, and they cried together, little children again in their sorrow. The next morning he said Mass for his father's soul, and the altar was wet with his tears.

Later, he went to see his mother. "The trip I have just made was the saddest of my life," he wrote to Father Bret. "You know my father died very suddenly, on his way home from the mill. Oh, what sorrow! Nothing can ever console us! My poor

mother is resigning herself, little by little, to God's will, and taking courage to go on alone. I feared at first the blow would be too heavy for her to bear."

Father Chanel's work at the college filled his days so completely that he had time for few visits except to his sister. He and she, always so close to each other, loved to talk together of the happiness of the religious life. Sister St. Dominic was never weary congratulating him on having joined the Society of Mary; she even urged him to cling to his desire for the Foreign Missions. Quite simply she would tell him of her faults and ask how she might correct them. "Don't forget that it is to make us humble that God leaves us our weaknesses," he sometimes reminded her. "We must believe that He thinks of us and loves us; we ought to have our eyes fixed on him rather than on our faults. St. Francis de Sales tells us not to examine whether our hearts please Him, but whether His heart pleases us."

Many outside the preparatory seminary appealed to Father Chanel for encouragement and direction, and he found abundant time for each soul. One of his nieces, a novice in the Visitation convent of Bourg, wrote to him that she wished to return home. "What!" he replied. "You would throw aside the sword of sacrifice before you have won the crown! Take courage, my child; try to strengthen yourself in your vocation; increase the number and the fervor of your prayers; throw yourself at the feet of the Blessed Virgin and beseech her to be your light and your strength in the way which will lead you to heaven. Remember, life is but a rapid passage across the plank which separates time from eternity."

The superior of a large community having sought his advice in her trials and perplexities, he wrote, "I have just read a letter of Fénelon's which will, I am sure, comfort your weariness and renew your courage. I am going to copy some extracts from it in which you will find much food for thought. 'It is in prayer

alone that you will get the courage, patience, sweetness, and firmness necessary in the guidance of souls. There you will learn to rule with ease. It is in time of silence that God will take your heart from you and give you His. Let Him be all in all to you. You cannot pray too much.

'If you make decisions, and if you act without prayer you will always be uneasy, you will draw upon yourself many contradictions, you will spend yourself for nothing; but if you are faithful to prayer, your purgatory will become an earthly paradise. You will do more good in one day, with peace in your heart, than you could do in a month when you are troubled. Those who are closely united to God are always close to one another; those who live in the same house, but are not united in the heart of God, are strangers to one another.'"

To an old pupil of Belley who asked his advice as to means of overcoming the many temptations that beset him in the world, Father Chanel said, "I am happy to see that you are in earnest about your salvation. Keep up your courage to tread God's way to the end; only by persevering can you be saved. I am going to give you some rules which I hope will prove helpful: Every morning, on awakening, raise your heart to God and give a few moments to prayer and meditation. Meditation enlightens the soul, reminds it of its duties and disposes it to fulfill them. Go to confession at least once a month. Never go to bed with a mortal sin on your conscience. At your age the soul is often weak, but with your faith and the sterling principles deep-rooted within you, repentance should be prompt and easy. Be on your guard against bad books and dangerous companions. Do not allow yourself too much leisure. Work fortifies us against the attacks of the devil, who should always find us busy. Young and strong though you are, accustom yourself to the thought of death. It drives away sin and leads to virtue; it frightens only guilt. Above

all, dear child, have a filial love for the Blessed Virgin. It has been said and cannot be too often repeated, 'No servant of Mary will ever perish.' "

Early in the month of May, that month he loved above all others, Father Chanel and his fellow Marists received news that gave them great joy. The Society of Mary had been solemnly approved by Gregory XVI, and the brief was on its way to France. When Father Colin received it, he gathered his sons about him, and one by one they knelt and kissed it to signify their whole-hearted acceptance of all it contained. It was then opened and read with profound emotion:

"The salvation of all nations, a charge laid upon us as prince of pastors and shepherd of souls, forbids us to let pass any means of giving praise to the name of the Lord, from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof, and of spreading the holy Catholic Faith, without which it is impossible to please God.

"Hence we surround with the tenderest love of our paternal heart those ecclesiastics who, banded together, cease not to exhort the people, by preaching the word of God and administering the Sacraments, endeavoring, by every means in their power, to produce abundant fruit in the vineyard of the Lord.

"So it gave us great happiness to learn that our beloved son, Claude Colin, and other priests of the diocese of Belley, laid some years ago, the foundations of a new society called the Society of Mary. This society has for its aim the glory of God and the honor of His holy Mother, and the spreading of the faith of Christ's Church, by educating children and establishing missions even to the ends of the earth."[1]

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[1] Blessed John Mary Vianney, Curé d'Ars, more than once besought his bishop to allow him to enter the Society of Mary, of which he said: "It is a work after God's heart, because it has humility, simplicity, and contradictions." To some Marist priests he once exclaimed, "What happiness is yours! You are sons of Father Colin, that holy priest whom I knew so well at the seminary. I, too, wished to be a Marist, but the bishop would not hear of such a thing." Failing to obtain the permission he desired, the humble Curé d'Ars joined the Third Order. Since his beatification he is its special patron.

The brief went on to say that the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda had assigned western Oceania to the new society and accorded it all necessary faculties for the election of a superior general and the taking of simple religious vows. It was decided that the superior general should be chosen and the vows made on September twenty-fourth, feast of Our Lady of Mercy, after some days spent in retreat.

Another brief named Monseignor Pompallier Bishop of Marone and Vicar Apostolic of western Oceania. All was settled except that Father Colin had yet to announce who were to be the privileged missionaries.

At last Father Chanel saw the apostolic life open before him. He had already often offered himself for the first band of missionaries sent out by the Society, and when he was chosen, his joy was almost greater than his heart could hold. He had reached the height of earthly happiness. "Oh, what good news I have to tell you," he wrote to one of his friends. "Our little Society has been approved by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who has deigned to confide to it the missions of Oceania. How can we ever thank God as we should! I have been named one of the first band. My heart has not stopped throbbing for joy since I was told. There will be eight of us, five priests and three brothers. Father Bret, whom you know, is of the number. He is as happy as I. Already he seems more serious, more recollected, than of old. For several days I have not seen him without either his beads or the Life of St. Francis Xaxier in his hands.

"We shall be ready to start whenever the Holy Father gives the signal. Time will lag until we are off for Polynesia. In such a long voyage there will be many dangers, but I am not the least afraid. I have made to God the sacrifice of my life. Only one thought frightens me: I am so unworthy of my high vocation. I need so much help from God and the Blessed Virgin that I am begging prayers on all sides.

I count on yours. Bishop Devie encourages me and has promised me his."

Early in July he went to Cuet to prepare his relatives, and his mother in particular, for a last separation from him. "I have just come from home," he wrote to the same friend. "Thanks be to God, my relatives are well. I talked much to them of the Foreign Missions, but without telling them that I am to go. It would have grieved them too much. But I confided my secret to two priests of the neighborhood and charged them to prepare my people, little by little, for the terrible news of my departure; above all I begged them to console my poor mother.

"You must pardon my having passed through Ambérieux without stopping. I was in a hurry to get back to Belley, where my work was clamoring for me.

"Since they deigned to choose me for the missions of Oceania, my heart and soul are always across the sea. It seems to me that I am already in the midst of my dear savages. I think I see them and hear them speak. Oh, that it may not be long before this sweet dream comes true! Father Colin, our superior, thinks that we shall soon receive our faculties. He is doing all in his power to hasten our departure that he may not have to reproach himself with the loss of a single soul. Tears come into his eyes whenever any one speaks to him about the missions. He would gladly go with us, if he could free himself from the chains that bind him to France."

In another letter Father Chanel said, "Would you like to know just where we are going? Take your atlas, double Cape Horn at the southern extremity of America, and go as far as our antipodes. Our mission embraces the whole archipelago between southern New Zealand and the northern Pacific. What a vast field we shall have to cultivate! Why have we not a thousand lives for such an enterprise! How I do long to start! A voice in the bottom of my heart tells me that my true fatherland is the islands that are awaiting

us. I am but an exile in France. But do not fear that I shall ever forget my family, my benefactors, or my friends. Pray, Oh, pray for me!"

As for Father Chanel himself, he prayed day and night. The nearer came the hour of separation, the more often was he to be found near the Blessed Sacrament. At the close of the school year, August, 1836, he laid aside forever his duties at the preparatory seminary of Belley. "Not one of us," M. Modelon related, "ever forgot the last good-bye of Father Chanel when, faithful to his vocation, he was about to leave France to carry the Gospel to the savages of Oceania. Knowing that he would never again see his country or his dear children of Belley, after he had said Mass for us for the last time, he held before our eyes a statue of the Blessed Virgin, and prayed, with tears, 'Oh dear Mother, you know how I have loved these children confided to me by your Son. Watch over them, I pray you, when I am gone.' He blessed us, then, and went away. Many of us were weeping too."

CHAPTER IX.

Religious Profession and Last Good-Byes.

After the boys were gone, Father Chanel suddenly became more grave and thoughtful than usual. The apostolate which he had so long and so ardently desired, whose approach had at first filled his soul with joy, began to appall and frighten him. Face to face with the difficulties and dangers of a mission so far away and among a people so barbarous, he began to wonder if he had not been thoughtlessly carried away by a too ardent enthusiasm, and if he had properly weighed before God the call to so high a vocation. Tortured by such thoughts as these, he went one day to the convent of Bon-Repos, and in asking the superior for the prayers of the community he could not refrain from telling her of his fears and anguish of mind. "Ah, Father," the holy religious replied, "What a tremendous grace God is giving you in sending you to Oceania! Would you let slip from your hands the palm of the apostolate, perhaps even of martyrdom! Will you be one of those who are afraid to sacrifice their ease and comfort, when there is question of the glory of God! Go, courageously and confidently! You may count on our prayers; we hope to be remembered in yours." Her words were a flash of light for Father Chanel. The darkness which had fallen upon his soul was dissipated instantly, and he knew himself to be so strongly confirmed in his vocation that nothing could ever again unsettle him. He told a friend in Ambérieux of the trial through which he had passed,

and asked her to unite with him in thanking the Blessed Virgin for the victory gained.

Some of his friends tried more than once to shake his resolution. They praised his zeal, but insisted that to exercise it, it was unnecessary to go to the antipodes while there remained thousands of souls in France to be converted, and they told him that his frail health could not withstand the fatigue of so long a journey. To all their objections Father Chanel replied only that he had thought much, had asked the advice of wise and holy men, and had weighed the matter before God.

Father Bernard, the friend and relative whom he had visited at Ferney, wrote long afterwards, "I will not conceal the fact that because I loved Peter Chanel so much, I did all that I could to keep him from going to Oceănia. He paid no heed to my objections, but answered smilingly, 'My dear friend, all you are saying goes in one ear and out the other.' But when I embraced him for the last time, I saw tears in his eyes. He had such a loving heart!

"I wrote to him while he was at Havre, begging his pardon for having raised so many difficulties on the subject of his vocation. He replied, 'You speak of something that is weighing heavy on your heart, but which did not even touch mine. Dear friend, do not think any more of the little gibes you gave me before I left. They did not lessen in the least my deep affection for you.' The letter closed with these words, 'Good-bye until we meet in heaven, or in Polynesia.'"

In the middle of September the members of the Society of Mary gathered at Belley to make their retreat under the direction of Bishops Devie and Pompallier. At the close of the exercises, on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, the priests of the Society canonically elected their superior general, as they had been directed by the brief of approbation. Father Colin was chosen. The election made, all pronounced their three religious vows of poverty, chastity, and

CUET—THE HOME OF BLESSED CHANEL

obedience. No one was more eager than Father Chanel thus to bind himself forever. Father Bourdin, having confided to him that he hesitated, Father Chanel said earnestly, "Dear friend, do not be afraid. I have known you too long to have the least doubt of your vocation." And without further trouble of mind, Father Bourdin made his vows.

To obtain strength for his own soul and the blessing of God upon his mission, Father Chanel prayed even more fervently than usual during these last days in France, and he begged prayers on all sides. Prayer, he said, was his principal preparation for the journey. He had printed and distributed far and wide little pictures of the Blessed Virgin, which bore this inscription: "Through thy intercession, O Mary, may the Saviour of men become known and adored over all the earth." He asked teachers and fathers of families to teach this invocation to their children. For his part, he promised to pray for all who helped his apostolate and to recommend them to the gratitude of his future converts.

When he went to say good-bye to Bishop Devie, the holy old man received him sadly but with utmost kindness. "So you are going to leave us, my child!" he said. "At last you see fulfilled the desire which has consumed your soul for so many years. Need I tell you that your leaving me is the first sorrow you have ever caused me? However, I rejoice, because I cannot doubt that you are obeying the will of God. It is He who is calling you hence. More than once I was obliged to grieve you by opposing your departure for the New World; but I delayed the beginning of your missionary work only that I might be certain of the reality of a vocation far out of the ordinary. It is well that you have been prepared by the exercise of your sacred ministry. Providence did even more for you. It has made you a religious. The course which you are entering is beautiful, but difficult; you must expect constant privation and much fatigue. But

courage! The Blessed Virgin loves you with a very special love; she will support you, console you, and make you triumph over difficulties. Goodbye, now; let me give you my blessing for the last time." And Bishop Devie blessed him with tears.

At the convent of Bon-Repos Father Chanel preached a farewell sermon on the mission of the Church which made a lasting impression on the community. "What a glorious destiny is that of the Church, our Mother!" he exclaimed. "Like the sun she shines over the whole earth to enlighten and to vivify. Her course is marked out for her by her Divine Spouse. She pursues it, she fulfills it, allowing no obstacle to hinder her. Heaven and earth will pass away before this word of Jesus Christ, 'This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world.' There will be no country, however distant, or however barbarous, that His light does not penetrate."

After pointing out in some detail how the Church fulfills her mission, he went on, "You are unable, dear Sisters, to go forth and preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, but be missionaries in your holy seclusion. The apostolate of prayer is not less efficacious than that of the priesthood. St. Francis Xavier understood this, so from Asia he wrote to his beloved brethren in Rome, 'I am but a sinner; I do not deserve to serve as the instrument of God's mercy to the infidels; but if you remember me in your prayers, I hope that God will use me to plant the Faith in these pagan lands.' It was revealed to St. Teresa that her prayers had won the conversion of thousands of infidels. Perhaps you will say that you cannot pray with her seraphic fervor; but you are members of the Church which never prays in vain; and, by this title, have you not the right to unite your petitions to those of the Spouse of Jesus Christ? It is more than a right, it is a sacred duty.

"I have often begged you to remember my intentions in your Holy Communions. I realize that you

helped me much in the work I have just laid aside. And if your prayers supported me heretofore, can you refuse them to me when my need has grown immeasurably greater?"

After leaving the chapel, Father Chanel saw his sister privately. For the last time he spoke to her of the unutterable sweetness of the religious life, urging her to aim always at perfection, and again he begged for her prayers. She rejoiced with him over God's goodness in calling him to the Foreign Mission field and asked him always to remember her in his Masses. Only high and holy thoughts filled their minds in that last sweet talk. Each made his sacrifice generously, heroically. But nature would have its way, and when her brother was gone Sister St. Dominic's courage slipped away from her, and running to the superior, in a strange but beautiful spirit of obedience, she asked if she might cry. For Father Chanel, whose loving heart ached so sorely when he parted from his boys and his friends, what must have been the pain of this separation!

On leaving Belley he went home to say farewell to his relatives. He stopped first at Ambérieux, and for the last time presided at a meeting of *"Les Filles de la Persévérance."* To all the members he gave holy pictures on which he had written, "Pray for me." His last words to them were, "I will not say good-bye; we shall meet again in heaven. Let no one of us be missing."

The same day he went to the seminary of Brou where he had a long talk about the missions of Oceania with Father Perrodin, the superior, who said afterward that such joy shone in Father Chanel's face, as he talked, that he looked like an angel. "I am going far in search of my salvation, and I have great hope of finding it there," he said to Father Perrodin, with that radiant smile of his.

The next day, October first, he reached home in the morning. He talked a great deal about the missions,

but without letting any one suspect how distant a one had been confided to him. One of his brothers noticed that he seemed to be ecstatically happy and wondered a little. "And when will you come back?" he asked. Father Chanel smiled at him as he answered, "Who knows? If I do not see you again on earth we shall meet in heaven."

On Sunday, Feast of the Holy Rosary, he said Mass in the little church at Cuet. Father Terrier, the pastor, asked him to preach, and he profited by this opportunity to recommend great love for the Blessed Virgin, and to ask the people for their prayers. His mother dined with him at the presbytery. "After vespers," he wrote to Sister St. Dominic, "we chatted for a little while longer. She was concerned about what she should give us for dinner on the following day. Poor Mother! She had no thought of not seeing me again, but so it happened. I went to Monteval to call on the pastor and spent the night at Malafrétaz. On Monday morning I saw but two sisters and their families before going to Cras to say Mass. Josephte chanced to be there, too, so I saw everybody. I dined that day at Attignat."

The curé of Attignat, an old friend and former schoolmate, had invited several priests of the neighborhood to meet him at his house, and after dinner Father Chanel told them what he knew of his mission and solicitated their alms, and above all, their prayers. They gave generously of their small means, and all promised to remember him frequently at the Altar. One of those present imagined that he was sad at heart and made occasion to speak encouragingly to him. "My dear friend, I was never farther from discouragement," Father Chanel replied. "I have only happiness in my vocation and a sweet hope of martyrdom."

On the eve of the departure of this first missionary band of the Society of Mary, Father Colin addressed to them a long letter which bears witness to his lively faith, wisdom, and fatherly tenderness:

"My dear Brothers in Jesus and Mary,

"May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and remain with you forever.

"I admit that it is with a feeling akin to jealousy that I see you with such holy courage break all the ties of flesh and blood to follow in the way you are called and to carry the torch of faith to the people of western Oceania. What would I not give to partake of your happiness and participate in your labors that I might share later in the great reward promised you in heaven! Alas, my sins make me unworthy of the grace of the apostolate and of martyrdom. But permit me, at least, to give you some advice which may be useful to you, and which will be for you a new proof of my tender affection.

"Put no trust in yourselves, either in prosperity or in adversity, but put all your trust in Jesus and Mary. The more you have this mistrust of yourselves and this trust in God, the more surely will you draw down the favor of heaven. The man of faith who puts his trust in God alone stands firm in the midst of danger. He is neither rash nor timid. Remember always that the success of your mission will be the reward of your faith and your confidence in God alone.

"Never lose sight of God's presence. It is in His name that you go; it is He who sends you. He will be with you everywhere, as He was with the Apostles; He will be with you on land and sea, in calm and tempest, in health and in sickness; if you are hungry or thirsty, He will hunger and thirst with you. It is He whom they will receive in receiving you; He whom they will persecute, if they persecute you; He whom they will reject, if they reject you. See Him, then, everywhere, at all times, in whatever comes, be it good or ill fortune; see Him always intimately united to you—sharing your work, your sufferings, your consolations, your joys. Do all for His glory, forgetting yourselves. It is in the ever-present thought of your

Divine Saviour that you will find your strength. your peace, and all the light you need. * * * *

"Be men of prayer. To convert a soul is a greater work than to raise a dead man to life, and it cannot be done without prayer. Pray, then, continually for the conversion of your poor people; offer each day's actions for this intention. However busy you may be, never allow a day to pass without saying at least some decades of the Rosary. Place every island you come to under the protection of Mary.

"As far as circumstances permit, be always simple, modest, poor, though properly clothed and housed. Ask of one another the permissions you desire, when you cannot ask them of Bishop Pompallier. Except in case of absolute necessity do not go out or remain at home alone. Go two and two, if it is only for a walk. This precaution will preserve you from many dangers.

"Finally, be united in Jesus and Mary. There must be no contentions among you; obey Bishop Pompallier and your superior. I repeat the advice I gave before, that you address to the superior of the Society all letters you send to Europe. To finish as I began: I wish you the peace and love of Jesus and Mary. Be brave; never allow fear or melancholy to enter your souls. Let each one make a copy of this letter and read it often. I embrace you with tender affection and promise you the prayers of the whole Society. Avail yourselves of every opportunity of letting us hear from you.

"I am and will always be your humble and devoted servant, C. Colin, Superior."

Father Chanel took this letter for his rule of conduct. Later he wrote to Father Colin, "Accept my deep gratitude for the wise advice you so kindly gave us. May it fructify in our souls! We hope that our hearts will be as burning as the climate in which we will live. But how far they are from being so! We try each day to make our religious exercises together.

Each one of us has a copy of your letter which we prize as a last proof of your fatherly love. We follow the regulations which the Bishop has laid down for us. We do not want to put any obstacles in the way of God's mercy to the islanders committed to our care."

No one had deeper esteem for Father Chanel than Bishop Pompallier. He appointed him his pro-vicar apostolic, and Father Colin had already named him superior of the missionary band. This double office laid upon him the necessity of providing what was needed for the journey and for the future mission. Bishop Pompallier went to Paris taking with him Fathers Servant and Bret and Brother Joseph Xavier, and on October fifth Father Chanel went to Lyons where he had business. He bought supplies and sent them to Havre, collected alms, and got the promise of innumerable prayers. Every morning he climbed the hill to the church of Our Lady of Fourvière and said his Mass at the Blessed Virgin's altar. On the last day he suspended a red heart from the neck of the Infant Jesus whom the Blessed Mother holds in her arms. Each missionary had been told by the bishop to get one of these hearts and have his name engraved upon it. Father Chanel's example is followed by all his successors, who before they leave France go to Fourvière to consecrate themselves to Our Lady and to leave their hearts beside his.

On the sixteenth of October, 1836, Father Chanel, accompanied by Father Bataillon and Brothers Michael and Mary Nizier, left Lyons for Paris. During their journey, hearing some one take the Holy Name in vain, Father Chanel said quickly, "Let us say some prayers and an act of contrition to beg God's pardon for that sin." This done, his accustomed gaiety returned, and he charmed his companions all the way by the vivacity and sweetness of his conversation. In Paris they joined Bishop Pompallier at the Seminary for the Foreign Missions, where they were warmly welcomed. Father Chanel wrote of this visit, "I could

never express all that I felt in the depths of my soul in that hallowed place where so many saintly priests have prepared for the missions and for martyrdom. How many times did I meditate in the hall where some of their relics are preserved!"

At the seminary of Rouen the missionaries were received with brotherly affection. It was dark when they left, and one of the party, shutting the door of the carriage, severely bruised one of Father Chanel's fingers. He made no outcry, and it was only the next morning when they saw his hand, that his companions knew anything of the accident. They could imagine, then, how he had suffered all through the night. At Havre, Mme. Dodard, a pious widow, eighty-three years of age, received them into her house with a cordiality which she showed to all missionaries. On All Saints Day Father Chanel preached twice, the second sermon, in particular, making a deep impression. Mme. Dodard was so much touched by it that she chose him for her confessor during the last illness which soon came upon her.

Contrary winds delayed the long anticipated departure of the missionaries. Father Chanel and all the members of his party profited by the time thus thrown upon their hands to study English, thinking it would be useful later. They greatly regretted having been unable to procure in Paris any book which would give them a key to Polynesian idioms. They had leisure, too, during those weeks of waiting, to write many letters—happy letters they were, breathing childlike trust in God.

On November twenty-first Father Chanel wrote to Sister St. Dominic, "Another little word between us two, dear Sister. We have been nearly a month at Havre, or to be more exact, at Ingouville, a short distance from it. The bad weather continues to make it impossible for us to start, in spite of the fervent prayers that are being offered for us. Every day we scan the clouds, and nearly every day they bring us rain,

sleet or snow, lightning and thunder. However, last Saturday it looked as if better weather were coming; Sunday was even more promising; today, the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, we begin to fear more rain and contrary winds. God's will be done! * * * Keep on praying, for we never cease being grateful."

A month later he wrote to his sister, "Today, December thirty-third, is set for our departure, but it is possible that, in God's impenetrable design, we will be unable to start, because Mme. Dodard, our benefactress, is dangerously ill. For many a day she has begged of God the grace to die while there are missionaries in her house. She now has more than she can well accommodate. Never before did she have so many at one time. (There are thirty-four of us here.) It is possible that God is answering her prayer. Bishop Pompallier anointed her and gave her Holy Viaticum. It was all very touching because of her faith and fervor and the number of missionaries gathered about her bed. We shall be sad to see her go. She has been very kind to us. God's holy will be done."[1]

In a letter written during these days of tedious waiting, to the Superior General of the Sisters of Providence of Portieux, Father Chanel said, "All unworthy as I am of my sublime vocation I would not exchange it for a kingdom. I lack everything but good will. You will help me, I hope, to obtain the zeal and all the virtues necessary to the poorest of missionaries."

About the same time he wrote to Father Colin, and through him to his dear students of Belley, "After a month's delay we are about to start. The ship which is to take us to Valparaiso is in port, about to put to sea, if the good God does not see fit to hold it here a little longer. The *Josephine,* which will take Arch-

[1]Mme. Dodard died in January, 1837, a few days after the departure of the missionaries. In her last hour she said: "I hope that God will receive me in heaven, who here below have received all who were sent in His name, for His glory and the salvation of souls."

bishop Blanc and his twenty-two missionaries to New Orleans, will leave at the same time as our *Delphine*. We have agreed to sing the *Ave, Maris Stella* on both ships, as we start, to sing it with our whole hearts—and at the top of our voices. We are all as happy as kings, and all long to trust ourselves to the perils of the sea for the sake of Our Lord and His holy Mother. * * * I am continually edified by my companions. I ought to give them good example, and instead I receive it. See how I allow the tables to be turned!"

To some nuns at Lyons, who had asked for holy pictures with his autograph and that of another missionary, he wrote, "I know, my dear Sisters, that you will forgive two poor priests who would be only more unworthy of your interest in them, if they were to do as you so kindly asked them. The trial would be too great for their little mite of humility. In spite of all the motives we have to practice that virtue, which is the foundation and safeguard of all the others, we do it so poorly that we should feel a very human satisfaction in sending our autographs to be cherished. If our souls are dear to you, write in the place where our names would have been, 'May God have pity on those poor sinners whom You deign to send to help other sinners to heaven.' Don't be afraid to repeat this prayer thousands of times. * * * How good God is!"

CHAPTER X.

From Havre to Wallis.

At last the long anticipated day arrived. On the twenty-fourth of December, 1836, the future apostles of Oceania went on board the *Delphine*. Besides Bishop Pompallier and the Marists, there were several fathers of the Congregation of Picpus,[1] bound for the Gambier Islands. At the same hour Archbishop Blanc of New Orleans and his missionaries embarked on the *Josephine*. As they set sail the air rang with the hymn, *Ave, Maris Stella,* sung on both decks, by all the missionaries. The ships had some difficulty in getting out of the harbour, but as soon as the open sea was gained all went well, and after a few minutes the crowds on the dock lost sight of their friends forever.

"We are setting out happily," wrote Father Bret, "having placed our journey in the hands of the Blessed Virgin. How many envy our lot, and merited far

[1]The congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, commonly known as the Congregation of Picpus, was founded, early in the Nineteenth century, by Father Coudrin. He was only a deacon when the Revolutionary persecution dispersed the students of the seminary of Poitiers, where he was being trained. Having learned that Mgr. de Bonald, Bishop of Clermont, was in Paris and would ordain him, he hurried thither, and received Holy Orders in March, 1792. For a time he labored, disguised, in the dioceses of Poitiers and Tours. Later, he gathered a few disciples about him, made his religious vows, bought some dilapidated houses in Rue Picpus, in Paris, and there established himself and his religious. The fathers founded colleges and seminaries, and established themselves in Peru and Chile. In 1825 the evangelization of the Sandwich Islands was entrusted to the Congregation, and in 1833 the Archipelago of Oriental Oceania was also confided to it. Perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is made in many houses of the Congregation.

more than I to be chosen for the great work we are to do! * * * There are too many of us aboard for each to have a cabin to himself. Far from being annoyed at this, I am delighted, for I share Father Chanel's. The sailors seem to be very good. Several of them found medals which we had dropped and are wearing them. The captain and the first mate are very kind."

The *Delphine* was making good time when it was overtaken by a terrific storm. Thirty-two boats which had left Havre on the same day were driven back to shore. Only the *Delphine* and the *Josephine* were able to withstand the fury of the wind. The Blessed Virgin was protecting the missionaries, a protection all the more evident because the *Delphine* had a badly damaged rudder. A rope, which the captain of the harbour had not let go in time, had caught between the rudder and the back part of the ship. Not knowing what was wrong the sailors tugged at the rudder without helping matters in the least, but breaking two and loosening a third of the four rivets which attached it to the ship. The *Delphine* had been out for eight hours before the cause of the trouble was discovered; the rudder was then tied in place, and the captain attempted to reach the Canary Islands. For eight days it was either calm, very stormy, or the wind was contrary, and the ship was momentarily in danger of losing its rudder. Seeing the officers' anxiety, the passengers knew that there was real danger, but at last, on January seventh, a schooner came within hailing distance, and it tugged them into port at Santa Cruz.

During those days of danger the missionaries constantly invoked the Star of the Sea, and when the harbour was reached, they recited fervently the *Te Deum* and the Litany of Loretto in thanksgiving for their preservation. That morning, for the first time since their departure from Havre, Mass was said on board by Bishop Pompallier, and all the missionaries

received Holy Communion from his hand. The next day they went to the principal church where the Bishop, after being solemnly welcomed by the assembled clergy, said Mass in the presence of a large congregation.

The patience of the travelers was sorely tried at Santa Cruz, for the repairing of the *Delphine* consumed two months, instead of a few days, as they had hoped. The Bishop of Laguna invited Bishop Pompallier to be his guest while he was detained on the island, but he preferred to remain with his friends and shared with them a little room in the inn. To accustom themselves to the privations in store for them the missionaries slept on the floor and led a most mortified life. Soon sickness came to add to their sufferings. They had hoped, at first, to find at Santa Cruz rest and quiet which would benefit those among them who were ailing; instead, the weather was most inclement and a kind of epidemic was raging all along the shore. None of the missionaries entirely escaped it. When they put to sea again on February twenty-eighth, they were still far from well; Father Bret, in particular, was suffering from violent headache and a high fever which no medicine could allay.

It was not long after this that Father Chanel wrote to his mother, "In spite of our prayers and our tears, the good God took Father Bret from us. It pleased Him to crown him before the combat. * * * What a loss to our mission, and what a grief to me! He was always so good! His love for Our Lord was so tender and so sweet! Very early he gave proof of a zeal and devotedness truly apostolic.

"In his last illness he suffered a great deal, but was always patient and resigned. Sometimes he asked us to pray beside him, with no fear that he would grow weary; and with a crucifix clasped in his hand, he himself never ceased to pray. On Palm Sunday I gave him Holy Viaticum and anointed him. The next

morning he said to me that the end was very near, and he was happy to die a Marist; he thanked me for all the care I had given him. It mattered little to him, he said, that his body would be devoured by fishes instead of worms. At seven o'clock in the evening of Monday in Holy Week, the twentieth of March, 1837, he peacefully fell asleep in Our Lord."

The morning after Father Bret's death, Bishop Pompallier said Mass for the repose of his soul. All received Holy Communion for the same intention. About nine o'clock His Lordship read the funeral service in the presence of the crew and all the passengers, and spoke a few words that went straight to every heart. Then the body was confided to the ocean, there to await its glorious resurrection. All that day the ship's flag hung at half mast, and none of the sailors indulged in the amusements by which it was customary to celebrate crossing the equator, which they did that afternoon.

Father Chanel wrote to Father Colin to tell him of their great loss. After he had broken the news, he continued, "Happily, we have every consolation possible under the circumstances. We know that our dear brother left us for the heart of God. He will always be our friend, our brother. He has only changed from missionary to protector of our mission. May all your children, present and future, die as holily. Our number is diminished, but our courage and confidence in God seem to grow stronger day by day."

"Father Bret's death, so sad for us, was the signal for the conversion of the entire crew," wrote Father Bataillon. "We had already begun to instruct the sailors, and several of them had listened to our exhortations and had approached the Sacraments. After the death of Father Bret there was a real spiritual awakening. I shall always remember the mission we had aboard ship, and the singing, evening after evening, of litanies and hymns. No, I shall never forget

the consolations which God heaped upon us, as if to comfort us for the loss of our brother."

No one equaled Father Chanel in his zeal for the instruction of the sailors. His attractive manner and his kindliness had won their affection and esteem, and they listened to him more willingly than to the other missionaries. He knew how to explain the Church's doctrines and practices so simply and clearly that the dullest among them easily understood.

Speaking of these long, trying weeks, Father Bataillon bore this testimony of him, "He was not only our superior, but our model in all things—always kind, always cheerful, always patient, amid the discomforts of our long and difficult journey; affable towards all, thoughtful for all, he would not have wounded any one for the world; ever ready to console, to encourage, and to render every possible service, we never saw him in a bad humor. In a word, I do not remember ever to have observed the least fault in his conduct, or in his relations with those about him. * * * I have often said, and it gives me pleasure to say again that I never knew a man more gentle, more modest, and more candid. He did not lack prudence, but the simplicity of the dove was his distinguishing trait. I feel certain that he never lost his baptismal innocence."

On the twenty-seventh of April the *Delphine* was overtaken by a storm so violent that more than once all aboard thought she could not weather it; but it passed and did no great damage, and without further incident the ship at last reached Valparaiso. Writing to his mother an account of their long, wearisome, and often dangerous voyage, Father Chanel said, "There are days when travel by sea is very pleasant; there are others fit to disgust one forever with the idea of travel. If I had started for pleasure, the storms which buffeted us would have killed my fancy for that kind of amusement. But, thanks be to God, we missionaries were always glad to be where we were, bound for Oceania."

It was on the twenty-eighth of June that the travelers reached Valparaiso. "Hardly had we cast anchor," Father Bataillon related, "than three Fathers of the Congregation of Picpus came on board, welcomed us as warmly as their brothers, and offered us the use of their house and all they possessed, with a generosity that I shall never forget. On Bishop Pompallier, especially, they lavished the most delicate attentions, conducting him in triumph to their church, where the *Te Deum* and the Litany of Loretto were sung in thanksgiving for our safety. The next morning we had the consolation of seeing the sailors of the *Delphine,* who had already shown such excellent dispositions, one and all approach the Holy Table; and those among them who had never been confirmed received the Sacrament of Confirmation that same day."

The missionaries were detained for six weeks at Valparaiso. The *Delphine* had reached the end of her voyage, and they had to find another ship to take them to the islands of Oceania. For many days their efforts were in vain, and they availed themselves of their enforced leisure to write letters to friends and relatives in Europe, knowing that afterward it would be only at long intervals that they could send any word to those at home.

To his mother Father Chanel wrote most lovingly: "I am afraid, Mother dear, that I forgot to ask your blessing when we parted. I beg you to give it to me, not only when you receive this letter, but again and again every day of my life. It will reach me, never fear, across all the miles that separate us."

On the twenty-third of July he wrote to the students of the preparatory seminary of Belley, "My dear friends, it is now nearly a year since Divine Providence separated us. I assure you I have kept the promise, made in my last letter, that my heart will always be with you. The farther the *Delphine* carried me from you, the more did I love to follow you in spirit through your daily routine. We are not yet

CUET—THE BEDROOM OF BLESSED CHANEL

among the poor savages of whom I told you so often, and with so much joy. Here, they tell us many things about them, all calculated to inflame our courage and our zeal. Not only missionaries, but ordinary travelers, who have been in Oceania tell us that there is a rich harvest there, ready to be gathered in. What will be our joy if God raises up among you many workers willing to share our labors and our consolations! Do not weigh the sacrifices; the greater they are, the happier will you be to offer them to Him who has done so much for each one of us. * * *

"In a few days we shall again put forth to sea. I am sure you are willing that we should tell our poor savages that in France there are many future missionaries, who long for the moment when they can come to aid us in the evangelization of the islands. * * Be missionaries of prayer, while awaiting the time when you can be so in action. I love to remember that you are under the Blessed Virgin's protection. Goodbye, goodbye, my dear friends."

After a month and a half of effort Bishop Pompallier was able to secure a ship: an American-owned vessel, called the *Europe,* whose captain agreed to take him and his party and the Fathers of the Congregation of Picpus as far as eastern Oceania. The *Europe* sailed from Valparaiso on the tenth of August. The crew was unlike that of the *Delphine.* One of the officers, learning that the captain had promised to take "papist missionaries," as he called them, declared that he would not go. It was the threats and curses of his fellow officers which made him embark at last. And all the sailors partook, to a greater or less degree, of his prejudice against the Church and her ministers.

"Let us pray for them, and be very kind, and give as little trouble as possible," Father Chanel suggested to his friends. All followed this advice, and soon distrust and dislike gave place to esteem and affection. Watching the missionaries, day after day, the seamen began to be glad they were on board; they liked to

talk to them, to listen to the hymns they sang, to see them pray and say Mass. Sometimes the captain asked them to sing some canticle to obtain from heaven the favorable winds on which all depended. The officer, who had for a time refused to sail on the same ship with Catholic priests, grew to love them, and said he intended to place himself under instruction when he reached Tahiti. He explained laughingly that he had imbibed his hatred of Catholics from his mother, who had often told him that papist priests are veritable monsters whom it is contamination even to look upon. "I conceived such an aversion for them," he said, "that I determined never to have anything to do with them. But your goodness quickly changed my opinion. You have dissipated all my prejudice."

Bishop Pompallier suggested that before reaching Oceania they should make their annual retreat. He and Father Chanel directed the exercises. "I shall never forget that retreat made in mid ocean," Father Bataillon told Father Bourdin. "It was so easy to meditate on the vanity of earthly things, separated from a watery grave only by a few frail planks! Seeing only the heavens and the raging waves of the sea, God's immensity seemed to be exemplified before us. Wonderful, indeed, as the Psalmist said, 'are the surges of the sea: and wonderful is the Lord on high.' At the sight of such grandeur as surrounded us, man feels his nothingness and instinctively turns, heart and soul, to Him who is master of life and death."

On the thirteenth of September the *Europe* reached Mangareva, one of the most important of the Gambier Islands. There disembarked the Fathers of the Congregation of Picpus, who had been with Bishop Pompallier and the Marists ever since they left Havre. Thanks to the zeal of Bishop Rouchouze and his missionaries of Picpus, the Faith had already made great strides in Mangareva. Anchor had hardly been cast before a number of natives scrambled aboard, and showed in a naive and very touching way their great

joy at seeing another bishop and more missionary priests. Throwing themselves on their knees they kissed the bishop's ring, and grasping the hands of the fathers they asserted loudly and earnestly that they, too, were Christians. The following day Bishop Pompallier said Mass in a poor little bamboo church, in the presence of Bishop Rouchouze, seven priests and six catechists. Many natives also assisted at the Holy Sacrifice, and sang with surprising sweetness and accuracy. The missionaries could not help weeping for joy.

All followed the bishops to a larger island where the king had arranged to meet them. The shore was crowded with Christians on their knees, who cried at the top of their voices, "Welcome! Welcome!" and begged the bishops to bless them. It was difficult for the party to make a way through the throng, for all the people wished to touch them and to kiss their hands. On every side they were shouting, "Welcome, missionaries! We are Christians! We belong to the Holy Roman Catholic Church! Jesus! Mary!" On reaching the church they made in unison a solemn profession of faith, and afterwards sang a hymn with edifying fervor.

Our missionaries passed the whole day among these good neophytes, who pressed about them, asking their names and those of their fathers and mothers. On learning of the death of Father Bret they shed many tears. "Why did you not bring with you the body of that saint?" the king asked. "Why did you not bring so great a treasure to us?" When evening came the natives begged to see Bishop Pompallier. To please them he and Bishop Rouchouze ascended a little hill, and the people hastened to present them with a great quantity of cocoanuts and bananas, cheering and shouting as they did so, and afterwards singing a hymn. Bishop Rouchouze made a little speech, and it was late before they went to their homes. Then,

all through the valley they could be heard reciting their night prayers in common.

On the following day, when the missionaries were walking about the island, they passed the abandoned temple of some pagan god. Workmen were wrecking it to use the stones for a church, and pointing out a carving on one of the supports—a crude representation of a rat—they said, "See what we used to adore!"

The new apostles of Oceania were filled with admiration of what they saw and heard. They could find no words to express all the joy they felt. Father Chanel could not restrain his tears. Looking up to heaven, he said, "Oh Mary, make such prodigies as these crown the work we are about to undertake! It would be for the glory of thy Divine Son, for your honor and the salvation of souls."

That day, September fifteenth, they returned to the *Europe* which was to resume its journey at nightfall. Bishop Rouchouze accompanied them to the ship and bade them goodbye with brotherly affection. The wind was favorable and they were driven swiftly towards Tahiti. The Marists could talk of nothing but the wonders they had just seen. "How happy that good bishop and his priests must be among their pious neophytes!" they said to one another, again and again. "Oh, when shall we have a like joy?" In the journal which he afterward kept, Father Chanel noted the anniversary of this visit, referring to it as one of the happiest times of his life.

On September twenty-second the *Europe* reached Tahiti, and at once she was boarded by a great number of natives. "The American consul was first to welcome us," Father Bataillon related. "Our venerable bishop sent messages to the queen and to Mr. Pritchard, the Protestant minister, asking permission to disembark. Though a like favor had been refused to some of the Fathers of Picpus they dared not refuse us, and we were permitted to land. The Bishop promptly called on the American consul, a Catholic

born in Holland, who had already done real service to the Faith by his goodness to other missionaries. In walking about Papeiti, which is a miserable village, we were struck by the immense difference between Catholic and Protestant settlements. In the Gambier Islands a few years had sufficed to effect radical and happy changes; in Tahiti, civilization had made almost no progress, although Protestant missionaries had labored there for many years.

"Our Bishop wished to pay his respects to the queen, Pomare. Father Maigret, Bishop Rouchouze's pro-vicar apostolic, was with us, and he acted as interpreter. A poor hut served as her palace, and we found her seated on the ground, as is the custom of the island. To the Bishop's questions she replied that she would gladly invite us to remain in her kingdom, but dared not for fear of the displeasure of Mr. Pritchard. The poor queen reigned, but did not rule.

"It was necessary for us to find a ship that would take us to western Oceania, and Her Highness, for lack of a better, recommended the *Raiatea,* which was placed at our disposal. A naval officer, Mr. Stoks, who had been with us all the way from Valparaiso, offered to act as captain. While the necessary preparations were being made, we visited the greater part of the island, delighting to cut into the bark of the trees the Cross and the names Jesus and Mary, that seeing them the devil might take flight, and that God would deign to send there the light of the true Faith."

Tahiti belongs to eastern Oceania, but while there Bishop Pompallier had occasion to exercise his sacred ministry in behalf of a soul belonging to his jurisdiction, by right of birth. "Yesterday," he related, "Father Chanel brought to me a little girl, six years of age, who had been born in New Zealand. Her father, who is employed on our boat, is a Catholic. He wished her to be baptized, and promised that she shall be raised in the Church. She had been living with some people in Tahiti, but henceforth he is going

to keep her with him on the sea. I baptized her solemnly in my cabin, before the little altar on which I had said Mass, and I also confirmed her. The child seemed to be deeply impressed by the ceremonies. All the priests and lay-brothers were present. This little girl is the first child born to the Church in New Zealand; she has received before any others the good tidings we are carrying to her people."

The missionaries parted regretfully from the friends they had made on the *Europe*. They and the members of the crew had learned to esteem and to love one another. When the *Raiatea,* setting sail, passed the *Europe,* both ships hoisted their flags, and affectionate good-byes were exchanged from their decks. It was on October fifth that the missionaries sighted the islands of western Oceania. Bishop Pompallier and Father Chanel wished to stop at one called Oulitea, but various obstacles rendered this impossible, and they made their way to Vavao, which in size and importance ranks second among the islands of the Tongo Archipelago.

"As soon as we saw it," wrote Father Batallion, "our hearts beat fast with joy; but alas, hardly had we approached the shore, looking for an anchorage, than a terrific storm arose. It seemed as if the devil had unchained all his fury at the sight of the apostles who were to overthrow his empire. The wind was very high, and rain fell in torrents. Suddenly the storm abated, and a terrifying darkness enveloped us; only lightning flashes, tearing the clouds, lighted this gruesome night. Our sailors vainly tried to resist the force of currents that dragged us towards the reefs until we were no farther from them than the length of our ship. We fell on our knees, praying, 'Oh God, save us or we perish! Oh holy Mary, take care of thy children!' And, all at once, the wind drove the *Raiatea* away from the reefs.

"But danger was not at an end. Strong currents next forced us towards some rocks. The men made

haste to lower the life-boat, hoping in it to save our lives and some of our belongings. A second gust of wind sent us far from the rocks towards the open sea. Mr. Stoks, our captain, was on his knees, crying out and praying, as if beside himself. 'I have often been in danger on the sea,' he told us later, 'but never before, was I so near death. Two minutes more and we should have been dashed against those sharp rocks.' You may imagine how fervently we thanked the Blessed Virgin for our preservation! Together we sang the *Te Deum* and the Litany of Loretto.

"At daybreak we approached the island for the second time. The Bishop told us to recite the *Veni Creator,* the *Ave Maris Stella,* and the *Miserere* for the people whom we were about to visit, and commanded that we should say these prayers for nine successive days whenever we reached an unconverted island.

"We cast anchor at noon, and instantly a number of natives crowded on board. How interesting they were! And how deeply we regretted that they were not Catholics! Soon, an old sailor made his appearance, the only Frenchman who had been on the island for twelve years. He told us all that we wished to know, and assured us that we should have no difficulty about seeing the king. He offered to act as interpreter.

"When we were conducted before His Majesty, the Bishop asked him if he would receive into his kingdom some of his companions, that they might study the language and try to teach the people many things known to the great civilized nations of the world. 'You may stay on this island,' replied the king, 'but I cannot permit you to teach my subjects anything before the return of Mr. Thomas. I have joined the religion he teaches and I intend to hold to it. What more could you teach me?' Bishop Pompallier was not discouraged. He said gently that the Protestant missionaries are not authorized to teach, and added,

'Your Majesty can compare their doctrine with ours and see on which side truth abides.' But the king clung to his resolution and put off further conversation for another day. As soon as Mr. Thomas returned, Bishop Pompallier wrote to him, asking for an interview, which was arranged for October twenty-sixth. On that day he, three fathers, and two lay-brothers went again to see the king, and afterwards called on the minister. His Lordship began by telling Mr. Thomas what had taken place between him and the king; he referred to the religious freedom accorded in England and France, and showed letters of protection given him by the French government and several English and American consuls. "In short," he concluded, "demanding a foothold in Vavao by right of my citizenship of France I insist that the law of nations be respected."

The minister replied, "This island is too small for two religions, and I know well that if you are allowed to remain, the whole population will soon be of your faith. There are other islands nearby; Wallis, for example, where our religion has never been preached. You can establish yourselves there with perfect liberty." The people of Wallis have massacred fifty or sixty natives whom the ministers had sent to convert them to Methodism; they had, also, more recently, captured and put to death the crew of two boats.

Mr. Thomas hastened to the king to poison his mind against the Catholic missionaries. He was leaving the royal presence, smiling, when the Bishop and his priests once more presented themselves. "When we came before His Majesty," Father Chanel related, "he looked disdainfully at us, and said in a loud and haughty tone, 'I have considered and have taken counsel. I do not wish that there should be two religions on the island. I command you, therefore, to leave my kingdom as soon as possible.'"

Bishop Pompallier insisted no longer. Without showing any resentment, he bade the king good-bye.

"In leaving Vavao I do not give up hope of seeing you again," he said.

"We returned directly to the Raiatea," wrote Father Bataillon. "Mr. Thomas, in an effort to make us believe that he had not influenced the king, sent us a number of books printed in the various dialects of Oceania, and with them a very polite note. Not to be outdone, Bishop Pompallier sent him gifts. Several Englishmen came to see us. They said frankly that they were indignant over the conduct of their ministers, and that our departure was much to be deplored. Their interest had been aroused by the stories of our captain, himself a Protestant, who had been amazed by the wonders which Catholicity had worked in the Gambier Islands.

"In spite of all they told us about Wallis, we decided to go there to see for ourselves how things were. We had on board an Englishman, named Thomas Boog, who had passed some months in Wallis Islands, and afterward settled in Futuna. He told us many things that we wished to know, and at need could act as our interpreter. After a quiet passage we reached Ouvea, called Wallis by the English, on November first, 1837. During Mass, said on board, we begged Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and all the saints to bless this first mission which we hoped to found. Two islanders had already come out in their canoes and lost no time in presenting themselves. They were young chiefs, Pelo from the larger island and Toung-hala for the smaller. Pelo and Mr. Stoks had met before, and greeted each other cordially; they had once made a trip together on a whaler, a happy circumstance for us.

"Our ecclesiastical dress puzzled the two chiefs. They opened wide their eyes and did not know what to think of us. 'Are you missionaries?' they asked; 'And do you come from the country of Bonaparte?' 'Yes,' we told them, 'We come from the country of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose name and exploits have

been heralded all over the world; we come from France, one of the greatest of all countries.' By talking of our country we hoped to make them forget their first question: are you missionaries? We knew that they hated the Protestant missionaries, and to have made known our names and our business at that moment might have forever closed the island against us.

"However, Tounghala, whom Almighty God and the Blessed Virgin disposed in our favor, closely questioned the captain as to who we were, our intentions, etc. Mr. Stoks spoke so highly of us that the young chief was our friend from that hour, and more than once rendered us inestimable service. While we talked, our schooner had almost reached the reefs that surround the island, against which the waves dash with a terrific noise. Thanks to the skill of Tounghala, the *Raiatea* passed through them easily, and into a circular bay dotted with canoes."

Bishop Pompallier, Father Bataillon, Pelo, and Thomas Boog landed. As soon as the bishop and the priest touched the soil of Wallis, they fell on their knees and recited a Hail Mary, to signify that they placed the island under the protection of the Blessed Virgin. Those who remained on the ship prayed fervently for the success of the visit.

They were taken to the king whom they found reclining on a straw mat. His Majesty offered them gifts which they accepted with many expressions of thanks; then, with the help of Thomas Boog, they explained to him the object of their visit, and their desire to leave two men in Wallis to learn the language of the country. Hearing this the king laughed; and after a moment's reflection, he asked, "Aren't you missionaries?" Knowing that he hated the Protestant missionaries whom he knew, the Bishop evaded the question. "Be assured that you have no reason to fear us," he replied. "You will soon see that we are your best friends." "Very well," the king made

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP BATAILLON

answer, "since you come as friends you may stay with me. I will have a hut built for you next to my own. I pledge myself to provide you with food and to protect you." Bishop Pompallier thanked him with a fervor which the king could little fathom, and when the party returned to the schooner all blessed God for having heard their prayers.

The next morning His Lordship named Father Bataillon and Brother Joseph as the two who were to remain in Wallis and found there the first mission of western Oceania. But that day difficulties arose. The king's relatives tried to persuade him to revoke his decision in favor of the missionaries. A council was held. The old man who was kivalou, or prime minister, advised that the strangers be sent away, saying, "I greatly fear that the end will be a change in the religion of our island, and on principle I oppose all that can, directly or indirectly, bring about the ruin of the faith of my fathers." His words made a deep impression, but Tounghala defended the missionaries so warmly that the king issued a formal order that they should be allowed to remain in Wallis. Doubtless it was by the inspiration of the Blessed Virgin that he acted thus, for while the council was being held, the missionaries were praying and scattering about medals of the Immaculate Conception.

The mission of Wallis succeeded so marvellously that in 1842 the Holy See separated central from western Oceania, erected another vicariate apostolic, and confided it to Father Bataillon. He was consecrated Bishop of Enos in 1843. There are today four Marist and two native priests on the island and several native nuns, one of whom is the king's sister. The entire population is Catholic.

CHAPTER XI.

Futuna.

On the seventh of November, 1837, the *Raiatea* set sail for Futuna to accommodate Thomas Boog and ten or twelve natives who had been in Wallis. It was agreed that the schooner should stay there only long enough to allow the passengers to disembark and to take on board some provisions which they were to give in payment for their passage. The Bishop was anxious to lose no time in establishing in Rotoma a mission which he intended to confide to Father Chanel. But God had other designs. The little island of Futuna was destined to be the field which Father Chanel would till and water with his blood.

The wind being favorable, the *Raiatea* reached Futuna on the eighth and cast anchor in the strait which separates the two islands and close to the smaller one which is called Alofi. Father Servant wrote, "When we landed the next day, we met the crew of an English whaler which had been wrecked on the reefs of the Fiji Archipelago. The captain implored Bishop Pompallier to receive him and his men aboard the *Raiatea*, and to take some of them to Rotoma and others to Sydney. The Bishop gladly agreed to do so."

The anchorage of the *Raiatea* proving insecure, its position was changed to the little port of Singave, and at once it was overrun by a crowd of curious natives. Eager though the Bishop was to proceed on his way, the necessary business consumed several days, during which he had leisure to talk to some

whites living on the island, who agreed that the Futunians were neither wicked nor savage, and would gladly receive missionaries. He gathered all available evidence in an effort to prove or disprove this verdict. Among the natives there was a man called Sam, dressed like a European, who knew a little English, presented himself with some ease of manner, and was affable and obliging. He confirmed all the good which had been reported of the islanders. Bishop Pompallier, influenced by all he heard and saw, decided to try to found a mission in Futuna and, calling Father Chanel aside, asked him if he were willing to remain there. "Your Lordship, I am at your command," he instantly replied.

One Saturday in November, the Bishop, accompanied by Father Chanel, Brother Mary Nizier, and Thomas Boog, and followed by a crowd of natives, went to the valley, called Alo, to see King Niuliki. His Majesty was not at home and they were obliged to wait several hours for his return. On his arrival Bishop Pompallier explained why they had come and his desire to leave two of his companions in Futuna to learn the language and customs of the island. He promised that they would repay His Majesty by their devotedness, if he would take them under his protection and provide for their maintenance.

At this proposal, the natives who had gathered in Alo deliberated among themselves for some time, while the missionaries whose fate hung in the balance prayed with intense fervor. Maligi, the prime minister, strongly opposed the reception of the foreigners, insisting that they wanted no new religion in Futuna. Maile, a cousin of the king's, who wielded great influence because of his bravery in battle, said, "I believe we would do well not to drive away these white men, but to invite them to remain on the island. Their presence can do us only good." This advice

prevailed, and the drinking of kava,[1] prepared with the customary elaborate ceremonial, ratified the decision. A feast was then served to all present. It consisted of a little pig roasted, a vegetable not unlike potatoes, and a third very strange dish, all of which were passed from one to another in baskets woven of leaves of the cocoanut tree.

After the repast the king asked his guests if they would like to see a Futunian dance. The Bishop replied, through Thomas Boog, that it would give them great pleasure. Soon the whole population of the valley of Alo gathered in the royal house, and about twenty of their number, men and women, took part in the dance, accompanying themselves by blows struck rythmically on a mat tightly stretched across a kind of bowl. As was the custom, the men formed one group, the women another. They kept perfect time, and were both graceful and modest.

All being over, the Bishop and his suite returned to the *Raiatea,* as soon as the tide permitted, which was not until after midnight. Their long absence and the excited crowds which had been seen on the shore had alarmed their friends, whose joy on seeing them was very great. As soon as they reached the deck Father Chanel began to say his office. Bishop Pompallier asked what he was doing, and Father Chanel replied, "I want to show Almighty God my good will by reciting the office which I could not say during the day." "I command you to stop, and to go to bed," the Bishop said; and Father Chanel obeyed instantly.

[1]Kava is a drink made from the root of a shrub named the Piper Methysticum. In more barbarous, but not very distant days, it was prepared by chewing; now, stones or graters are used. After the root is well pounded water is poured over it. The concoction is then strained, and served from cocoanut shells. It is presented to guests in the order of their importance. Each one's name is called and he answers by clapping his hands. It is deemed discourteous not to drain the shell at one draught. It tastes to the uninitiated like a mixture of ginger and soap-suds, seasoned with pepper, but people grow to like it. It is cooling and refreshing, and a wholesome beverage in tropical climates.

The next day, November twelfth, the future martyr of Futuna began his work there. When he set foot on the island he knelt and consecrated it to the Blessed Virgin, and in sign of this consecration hung a Miraculous Medal from one of the trees; he prayed, also, to St. Francis of Assisi, whom Bishop Pompallier had chosen for the special patron of Futuna. The king went to meet him, accompanied by his relatives and a number of his subjects. Kava was served and many gifts were distributed. Thus did Father Chanel enter upon the work of his apostolate and take the first step toward martyrdom—the work and the crown of which he had dreamed in the old presbytery of Cras and amid the hills of Crozet.

Brother Mary Nizier soon joined him in Niuliki's house. He, too, felt within his heart a great desire for sacrifice and self devotion, a desire destined to be fulfilled to the utmost in the mission he helped to found.

Some geographers call Futuna, Horn or Allafatu. It is 179° East longitude, and between 14° and 15° South latitude. Futuna includes two islands, separated by a little arm of the sea. The larger, which is twenty-nine or thirty miles in circumference, is Futuna, properly so called; the smaller is known as Alofi. The larger island was divided into two kingdoms nearly always at war with each other. Victory passed from one side to the other, and little Alofi was always obliged to submit to the conqueror. Once thickly populated, but one village had been left there after the many wars.

Both parts of Futuna are of very uneven formation, containing deep valleys and high mountains. The natives explained the physical features of the island in this way: Maoui Alona, a god who worked only in the darkness, was told one day by Teailoito, his doorkeeper, that there were in the bottom of the ocean a great number of fishes—that is to say, many groups of islands. The following night the god got into his

boat and cast his line. Whenever an island came out of the sea on his hook he jumped and skipped about on it to flatten it. He fished up and leveled a great many islands in this way. Day began to dawn. He knew that he could not work much longer, and hastily cast his line for the last time. An island came up and the god jumped upon it, but he had hardly begun to skip about when the sun rose; hence the mountainous condition of Futuna.

The island is evidently of volcanic formation, which probably accounts for the frequent earthquakes that shake it from end to end. "One night," Father Chanel wrote in 1840, "I was awakened by a shock so terrific that it seemed as if the whole of Futuna would be swallowed by the sea; and in the succeeding twenty-four hours I counted nine more, less violent than the first. This led me to the conclusion that our island rests upon a volcano, which probably formed it long, long ago. The natives give me another explanation. The god Mafouisse Tulu, so they say, is asleep deep down in the earth of the island. When he has slept for a time on one side he turns over and sleeps on the other, and it is these movements of his that shake the earth. If the crater ever reopens they can add that Mafouisse is breathing fire, and their fable will be as poetic as many of those told by the ancients."

"Futuna is very fertile," he said in the same letter. "Seen from the ocean it looks like a bouquet of flowers and leaves. The water is both abundant and pure. The animals, plants, trees and fruits native to Oceania are all to be found here."

The Futunians are Polynesians and bear every mark of their origin, being tall, muscular, and well proportioned; their skin is of a light copper color, and their features are strongly marked. They are intelligent and industrious. Their clothing was woven of leaves or straw and reached from the waist to the knees. It was the same for both sexes, except that the arrangement differed slightly. The men allowed their hair

to grow, greased it with a perfumed oil, and wore it tied, ordinarily, on the top of their heads. On meeting a chief, a relative, or a friend, it was loosened and allowed to hang down. To have passed through a strange village without giving this mark of respect and good will would have been an insult grave enough to have caused war. The women wore their hair short, but permitted two or three tufts to grow, which they arranged as their vanity suggested. At the death of a close relative, they shaved their heads in token of grief. Young girls wore their hair long until they were married; both men and women habitually wore, suspended from their ears, flowers, shells, or a few shark's teeth.

"There is a kind of ornamentation peculiar to the Futunians, in which they take great pride," Father Chanel wrote, in a letter to his family. "It consists in dividing the face into four parts and making two of them black and two red. The black is applied with charcoal; the red is obtained from a root which the natives gather and prepare in common, with games not very unlike those with which you celebrate the vintage. I leave you to judge of the curious effect of faces thus divided into compartments."

Every important event of life was celebrated by feasts, dances, and games. It was customary to circumcise the children. The ceremony had no religious significance, but was looked upon as one of the most solemn of all rites. On a fixed day the children of some valley would be gathered into one house. For five days after their circumcision they could not leave the place, and spent all their time eating and sleeping; they were then painted red and black and were henceforth considered to be "adorned for the interior of the house." The ceremony was renewed after some days, and they were then looked upon as "adorned for the outside." Fifteen days later their parents came, and there was a great feast, called "Takamoa," —"permission to leave."

Tattooing was practiced, as in all the neighboring islands. The tattooers used a piece of shell to which were attached five or six sharpened teeth which had been blackened. They drove these under the skin with little strokes of a stick, forming various designs on different parts of the men's bodies. Women received only a few fantastic marks on the hand or forearm. The operation was, of course, the occasion of a feast.

Over every marriage there was much merry-making. A young man, who wished to be married, spoke to the relatives of the girl whom he desired, his proposal always being accompanied by gifts. Custom allowed the relatives three days for consultation before they were obliged to consent or refuse. If a refusal was meant they sent him gifts equal in value to those they had received; if an acceptance, he received no answer, and on the fourth day his family prepared a great quantity of food and carried it to the relatives of the young girl. Both families, and often all the people from one or more valleys partook of the wedding feast, which was followed by games, songs and dances.

After the feast, which often lasted for several days, the affianced pair received a kind of nuptial consecration. They painted their faces, crowned themselves with flowers, put on their best clothes and went before a priest who prayed the gods to send them many children. Among the Futunians, marriage was not an irrevocable contract. It had no sacred character and separations took place for the most trivial reasons.

Funerals were more or less elaborate, according to the age, rank, and virtues of the deceased. The body was anointed with perfumed oil, the face painted red and black, and the breast covered with a beautiful mat. Before burial it was exposed for a whole day at the entrance of the family home. Friends and relatives gathered about in crowds, weeping, moaning most pitiably, and savagely tearing their faces with their nails or with shells. The women uttered certain doleful cries reserved to them.

When the dead man was laid in the earth, each of his relatives and friends approached and touched the corpse with the tip of his nose. The grave, which was always dug near the house, was then filled with sand. After four days it was encircled with stones, larger or smaller according to the dignity of the deceased, and for ten days it was sprinkled with perfumed oil every morning, and every evening was covered with several mats. The funeral was usually followed by great feasting and by dancing and boxing. The near relatives, in sign of sorrow, cut their hair entirely or in part, wore their coarsest clothes, did not bathe, and renewed, from time to time, the bloody scenes of the days before the burial.

Regarding the fate of the soul after death, the Futunians believed it to be immortal, and admitted two future states, one happy, the other miserable. To obtain the former it was necessary to have respected the gods, to have obeyed the chiefs, to have been married, and above all to have shed one's blood on the field of battle. Heaven was thought to be a country of abundant food and many games. In the center there was an immense tree, the Pokatala, whose leaves supplied every want. Cut in four they changed into all kinds of delicacies. When the happy people of heaven felt old age approach, they had only to bathe in Lake Vaiola to be restored to health and beauty.

The places of honor were reserved for those who had fallen in battle, but before entering heaven their souls lingered near their bodies for four days. The relatives of the dead warrior spread a mat over the spot where he had fallen and stepping back a little, watched closely for the first insect or snake that crossed it, or the shadow of the first bird that flew above it. Then, having carefully folded the mat, they buried it beside the corpse, because beyond doubt the soul of the warrior had passed into the body of that animal.

The dead who were unworthy of heaven went, without distinction of age, sex, or condition, to their "house of the dead." Each family or connection had one of these; it might be, for instance, in the trunk of a tree or on the top of a rock. There resided a god, called Atua matalua, which means god with two eyes. After a certain length of time they died again and went to another god, Alua matalasi—god with one eye; dying once more, they passed under the dominion of Alua mangungu, a deaf, dumb, and blind god, who had neither mouth nor nose. In living with these gods the dead became like to them, keeping both their eyes while with the first, having but one with the second, and with the third, losing eyes, ears, mouth, and nose. So they lived, in misery and without hope. With these various gods they had for food only reptiles and insects, such as ants and lizards. The unmarried, both men and women, were subjected to a special punishment before entering their "house of the dead."

"The people of Futuna," wrote Father Chanel, "are very hospitable. They are not given to theft, as are the greater number of the natives of Oceania." Their manners were gentler, but like many of their neighbors, they were cannibals. One of the fathers said, "The craving for human flesh reaches a point where the wars do not suffice to furnish victims for the horrible feasts, and the savages take them from among their own tribes: men, women, children, the old, friends, and enemies are killed without distinction. They even eat members of their own families; mothers roast and devour their children. Many a time I have touched the hand of a wretch who had killed and cooked his old parents to feast on them with his friends! One day they pointed out to me an old man who alone, in a village of two or three hundred souls, had escaped being roasted." Thus had the population been reduced to an alarming extent. When Father Chanel landed in Futuna there were only a thousand

people on the island. Niuliki had forbidden, under severe penalties, the eating of human flesh.

From the first Father Chanel and Brother Mary Nizier endeavored to adopt every innocent custom of the Futunians. They sat on the ground with their legs crossed after the traditional manner of tailors; they slept on mats spread in a corner of the king's house; they drank kava and ate the strange, distasteful food. "The natives," Brother Mary Nizier said, "cooked a little breakfast for us when we first settled among them, but they soon tired of this and we were obliged to follow their custom of eating no meal until three or four o'clock in the afternoon. We found the fast a little long, because we lacked their opportunities of getting fish and fruit between meals. To ease our pangs of hunger we began to go to a fruit dealer not very far from the king's house to buy a little something from him. The fruit was not very nourishing, but it kept up our courage while we waited for the evening meal."

And this meal, when it came, was hardly appetizing. It consisted of bananas, yams, and one or two other kinds of food unknown to Europeans. Far from improving delicate health, such diet quickly ruined it. What it must have cost Father Chanel, who was always frail, to have accustomed himself to such food, taken at so strange an hour! He never complained, but considered himself a spoiled child of Providence. Many kinds of food, relished by the Futunians, were really revolting to all but natives of Polynesia. Brother Mary Nizier testified that the islanders did not always take the trouble to cook fish before eating it. "Occasionally some one would present us with a few fish, and we would roast them," he wrote. "One day, however, not long after we reached Futuna, they offered us some little fish, raw as usual. After a moment's hesitation Father Chanel, overcoming his natural repugnance, said, 'In Rome do as the Romans do;' and he ate a few of the uncooked fish." Brother

Nizier added that later, so completely did Father Chanel master his disgust, that he ate them alive, as did the natives.

There are on the island very large worms which are found in the trunks of decaying trees. "The natives," Brother Mary Nizier told, "eat them with relish, especially when they are alive. One day they gave us some, and good Father Chanel, triumphing over his repugnance, tasted one, ate it, and declared that he found it delicious. As for me I was never able to make up my mind to swallow one." Such was the mortification which Father Chanel practiced; for such tests as these, had his early fasts and penances prepared him.

The royal "palace" offered poor facilities for prayer and study, and when Niuliki proposed to build them a little house and surround it with a garden, Father Chanel was overjoyed. He wrote to Father Convers, "The people helped to build us a little cabin. It was very simple work. Logs piled one on top of another and stuffed about with leaves from cocoanut trees, form the walls. The roof was made after the same pattern." In fact, it was so simple that before two months had passed, the missionary and his catechist could no longer keep out the rain. But this house had its advantages. It was in the beautiful valley of Alo and only a few hundred feet from the sea; and it made possible the privacy for which they had longed in vain while they formed part of the king's household.

Father Chanel had been in Futuna for a month, and during all that time had been deprived of the unspeakable joy of saying Mass, when a feast approached, which is especially dear to the heart of every Marist: the feast of the Immaculate Conception. He determined that it should not pass without his having offered the Holy Sacrifice. He remembered with joy that Bishop Pompallier had consecrated to Mary Immaculate the whole vicariate apostolic of western Oceania, and he hoped that on the approaching feast,

so glorious for her, the Blessed Virgin would lavish her choicest gifts on Futuna. That he might not be surprised by any of the natives, Father Chanel waited until they had gone to their work in the fields. And then the peace and joy that overflowed his soul! His face was fairly radiant.

He had the consolation of saying Mass six times before Christmas; but custom, in Futuna, permitted the natives to establish themselves, day or night, in the houses of others, and Father Chanel foresaw that he could not long continue to say Mass secretly, unless he was willing very often to be deprived of the privilege. He resolved to hide our Sacred Mysteries no longer. The kindness shown him by all assured him that he need have no fear; and perhaps he might be able in this way to begin the conversion of his people. He chose the midnight Mass of Christmas as the first which any of the natives were permitted to see. He invited Niuliki and his closest friends, making them understand, as well as he could, that a great treat was in store for them.

Brother Mary Nizier described it all as follows: "The evening before, we made our little preparations. Our poverty did not permit us to make much display. On each side of the altar we sunk a stake at the top of which was a small board cut to hold candles. We made hangings of a small piece of damask and some marbled paper, which we arranged to the best possible advantage. We had contrived lamps, from cocoanut shells cut in half, which we suspended on iron wires from the roof of our house that surely, in its poverty, resembled the stable of Bethlehem. We decorated the altar as prettily as we could.

"Early in the evening the king began to ask every few minutes, 'Isn't it nearly time for you to do as you promised?' 'It will soon be time,' we would tell him; and at last midnight came. Four candles were burning on the altar; others, fixed on the stake, were also lighted, and the lamps burned brightly. Father Chan-

el's vestments were really nice. He commenced by intoning the *Te Deum,* which we chanted from beginning to end. Then Mass began. We sang the *Kyrie,* the *Gloria in Excelsis,* and every part that could be sung.

"About fifteen persons were present, assisting for the first time in their lives at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The novelty of the spectacle did not call forth any demonstrations which were distracting; we heard only some whispering, inevitable and excusable under the circumstances. Judging by appearances, they were satisfied with what they saw. Before morning the news had spread, and people came from every direction asking to see the decorated house, and begging Father Chanel to do over again, for their benefit, what he had done in the night. The second and third Masses were said with no strangers present, and then we put everything away." Father Chanel noted in his journal that after this a few people from different parts of the island were present nearly every time he said Mass. They came even from Singave, which is on the side belonging to the conquered king.

The journal referred to is of tremendous interest. Father Colin had recommended that each missionary should keep a journal, noting down all that he thought would interest or edify his brothers in Europe, or be useful for the guidance of others destined for the propagation of the Faith in western Oceania. One book of Father Chanel's notes was lost. The first, which has been preserved, begins on December twenty-sixth, 1837, and ends December thirty-first, 1839; the second stops short on the twenty-second of April, 1841, six days before his martyrdom, and is stained with his blood.

In these precious pages he left an exact picture of his life in Futuna. In them he can be seen ever faithful to his rule, performing all his religious exercises with scrupulous exactness, saying Mass whenever it was possible, and noting down the times that he did

so; laboriously studying the difficult language of the country, and performing acts of most tender charity, day after day, with unwearied sweetness. He can be followed in his journeyings over every mile of the principal island and of little Alofi. He is to be seen in the huts of the poor and in the king's hardly more pretentious palace, close to the bedside of the dying, and mingling with noisy crowds of natives, everywhere profiting by all opportunities to preach Christ and Him crucified. Often his body burned with fever, his feet were torn and bleeding, his legs so swollen that he could hardly stand; but his zeal never faltered, his courage never failed. "God knows His own," he wrote, "and gives them superabundant happiness in the midst of tribulations." Sometimes he joyfully noted in the pages of his journal the baptism of a dying child. A soul safe forever! But when, in spite of his zeal, he reached a crib too late, what regret and sadness filled his heart!

When there was question of Father Chanel's beatification, the theologian charged with the examination of his writings, said of the journal, "His account, written not in a spirit of vainglory, but to urge himself on ever more and more by the remembrance of past work to the accomplishment of what was only begun, pictures in detail the trials and the difficulties he met with in his efforts for the conversion of the island; it testifies to the faith and charity with which he worked, and the fatigues which he supported to gain souls for Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, by reason of the perversity of the people and above all of the chiefs, during the three years and several months that he labored for the evangelization of Futuna, he succeeded poorly. Hardly forty-five persons were baptized, and nearly all of these were infants in danger of death, and he gathered about him but a handful of catechumens, although he employed every possible means and spared himself neither toil nor fatigue that the good seed might be sown. Unhappily, some of it

fell by the wayside and it was trodden down; and some other fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. It fills the heart with joy to read how valiantly he supported the innumerable contradictions and trials to which he was subjected; with what invincible courage he bore contempt, the pangs of hunger, and frequent peril of his life, especially in those last months when he had lost the king's favor and his persecution had begun."

This theologian closed his remarks with these words: "A man truly apostolic, who, saying good-bye to every joy and honor the world could offer, refusing to be held by his love for his mother, his friends or his country, devoted himself for the sake of eternal life to all that religion holds up as most sublime and most difficult. He allowed no labor to frighten, nor adversity to dishearten him. Danger, suffering, contradiction, and bodily weakness never for one moment discouraged him. He bent every energy to the gaining for Jesus Christ, by the light of the Gospel, souls seated in darkness and in the shadow of death. He worked like a good soldier and his reward did not fail him. In short, he merited the grace to seal with his blood the faith which he had preached."

On Father Chanel's writings the same report gives this verdict: "Every word is not only in perfect accord with Catholic teaching, but shows in the servant of God a high degree of piety, of faith and hope, of charity towards God and man, and above all, of ardent zeal for the propagation of the religion taught by Jesus Christ. The reader is lost in admiration when he sees with what transports of love this apostolic priest betrays these virtues in the letters which he wrote to his superior and his brothers of the Society of Mary, both during the long journey to Oceania and while he was at work among the barbarians."

Unable to preach during his first months in Futuna, because of his ignorance of the language, Father

Chanel prayed the more. As Father Bataillon wrote, "It grieved him to know that he was almost the only one to invoke God's name in that land given over to devil-worship. Gazing over the lovely, flower-decked island and beyond it at the ocean stretching as far as his eye could see, he loved to open his breviary and recite or chant the canticle of the three young Hebrews in the furnace, 'Let the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, bless Thee. And praise Thee and glorify Thee forever.' He had a great love for this canticle, which animates all nature and makes the stars of the heavens and the wonders of the earth to unite in praising God. He hoped by saying it often to drive the devil from beautiful but sin-stained Futuna and hasten the day when he might rejoice over souls pure in God's sight."

There was a devotion which he had always loved too dearly to neglect it in his difficult mission: the recitation of the Rosary. His beads were nearly always in his hand, and as he passed back and forth, through the valleys and over the hills of Futuna, he said them unceasingly. Long afterward a vicar apostolic of central Oceania said, "The old Futunians who saw Father Chanel in their youth say that his beads were ever in his hand, as he walked through the villages. He seemed to be sowing everywhere the seed of his Hail Marys." If the labors and interruptions of the day had left him little time to satisfy his devotion he would not go to bed without reciting at least five decades.

One day he was returning from Singave and the tide outstripped him. "I tried to get home by crossing a mountain and soon lost my way," he noted in his journal.[1] "There was no path. I had to climb and let myself down in dangerous places. I owe it to the Blessed Virgin that I did not descend by a way that would have meant certain death. It took me three hours and a half to make a distance that should have

[1]March 9, 1838.

been covered in a third of that time." Brother Mary Nizier added, "He reached home about eight o'clock in the evening, so bruised and exhausted that he said —though with his habitual gaiety—'Never before did I have such a day as this! You say the beads; I haven't strength enough, but I will make the responses.' I had to awaken him for each 'Holy Mary.'"

His piety led him to embrace eagerly the various practices recommended by the Church. He made one novena after another, all of them for the conversion of Futuna, so ardently desired but delayed by many obstacles. By an entire fidelity to his duties as priest and religious, he tried to make of himself an instrument fit for God's hand; and that he might, as soon as possible, preach his good tidings to the people, he spared himself no effort to learn the language of the island. In his very first days in Futuna, while still in the king's house, he studied it as best he might; but having neither grammar nor dictionary, he could learn only by the slow method of listening to the conversation of those about him, and of obtaining their help whenever this was possible. "We used to tell him the meaning of words, and he would write them down," Meitala, the king's son, related afterward. It is true that Thomas Boog spoke both English and Futunian, but he knew no other language, and it was difficult for Father Chanel to learn native idioms from him through the medium of English, which he knew very imperfectly.

With unwearied diligence he pursued his study of the language, as many entries in his diary testify; however, it was not until the last year of his ministry that he had perfect command of the strange tongue of his people. But as soon as he could make himself understood, even imperfectly, he began to go among the natives of the valley of Alo, in which he lived, and all whom he visited admired his gentleness and felt his kindliness. He had not changed since his days at Crozet. In time he extended the circuit of his visits,

THE PARISH CHURCH AT CUET

going to see families in every part of the island. "My first care," he wrote, "should be to become acquainted with the various families and to study the language and customs of the country that it may be in my power to evangelize it."

A little incident demonstrated to him the necessity of knowing local usages and superstitions. One day he was saying his office not far from the king's house, and seeing a square stone conveniently placed, he sat down upon it, little suspecting that it was the "divine stone." Niuliki called to him that he was doing something forbidden, but not understanding a word that was said, Father Chanel remained where he was and went on with his prayers until one of the king's sons made him to understand, by means of signs, that no one was permitted to sit upon that stone. Father Chanel rose instantly and, fearing that some trouble might arise from his mistake, he hurried to Thomas Boog for an explanation of the matter. "To understand it, you must know that in Futuna, as in the neighboring islands, they believe in gods of the first and second orders," Thomas Boog told him. "The greatest of them all is given the uncomplimentary name, Takavelikele, which means 'making the earth wicked.' Subject to him there are supposed to be a multitude of lesser gods, called Atouamouli. All misfortune is their work. They will not allow man to be happy, but persecute him with sickness, pestilence, and worst of all, death. To torture human beings is their delight.

"Before every royal abode there is placed a stone such as you sat upon. The islanders are very careful never to touch one of them; by doing so they would incur the displeasure of Takavelikele. You will find many superstitions among these people." And Thomas Boog told him of others, not less ridiculous.

Father Chanel soon learned from further experiences of his own that Thomas had spoken the truth. To Father Convers, he wrote, "Our islanders are extremely superstitious. Long accustomed, in their pit-

iable ignorance, to regard the gods as the sole cause of their misfortunes, they honor them, not in love, but in fear and trembling. Sickness and infirmity are regarded as effects of the anger of heaven. When a man falls ill, his friends hurriedly carry him to some house supposed to be favored by a god. It is important that they should first ascertain what part of the patient's body is affected, because each god has different houses for the cure of the different members. They carry with them fruits, pieces of cloth, or something they hold precious to propitiate the evil genii by their offerings. Sooner or later these gifts become the property of a few who encourage the superstitions of the majority and profit by them. How I long to see these poor Futunians turn from their miserable gods to serve the God of truth and love!"

On the island many, many things were "taboo," and it was forbidden to harm, and in some cases, even to touch them. The king had the right to declare certain persons or objects taboo, and no one dared to violate the interdict. Father Chanel was taboo until he lost Niuliki's favor; and if, for example, the king wished to give a great feast, he would taboo the pigs, cocoanuts and other articles of food, so that none could be eaten before the grand occasion. Turtles were always taboo. Only the king who was conqueror at the time had a right to kill them. Before each royal house there was a place set apart for him to do it.

The first time Father Chanel visited the village of Poi, many of the people told him of their ills, but he had with him nothing that might have helped them. From that day wherever he went he carried some simple remedies and more than once succeeded beyond his hopes in alleviating the suffering or curing the wounds of his people. His reputation grew, and in 1839 he could write in his journal, "I am acquiring quite a reputation for curing sores." One day the family of a sick man, whom the Father had been able to help, brought him some fine mats and other gifts.

They were following their old custom of making presents to those who had gods in their houses and to whom they carried the sick. With gentle expressions of thanks Father Chanel refused their gifts, saying that he had not come to Futuna to take their treasures from them.

He was sitting quietly in his little house in the valley of Alo about ten o'clock on the morning of the twenty-third of January, 1838, when suddenly the war cry resounded all about him. The women frantically called the men who were working in the fields. "They came quickly and seized their lances," Father Chanel wrote in his journal. "A council was held during which every one talked very loud, and a piece of kava root and a bamboo lance were offered to the gods by being laid beside the sacred stone. The men who placed them gave three great war cries, as they did so. This ceremony over, the warriors ran as fast as they could to the scene of the trouble."

Father Chanel followed them. On reaching the valley of Fikavi he learned that two young men of the conquered part of the island had stolen into the valley and treacherously killed a chief, whom they had found working in his field. The men of Alo were wild with excitement and athirst for vengeance. Their warlike feelings grew stronger as the hours passed. The drills they practiced and the speeches they made showed that King Niuliki's subjects had determined to go to war. Father Chanel urged every possible motive for peace. The people listened; but what would he have them to do? they asked.

On the morning of January twenty-fifth, he and Thomas Boog hurried to Singave to try to pacify the Conquered. Sam (the native to whom Bishop Pompallier had talked) explained to them in detail the plan of campaign which the Conquered had outlined and declared that if they were victorious, the island would see great changes. In vain did Father Chanel set forth excellent reasons why peace should not be

broken. Sam liked none of his arguments and replied that according to the customs of Futuna, once war was declared it must be fought.

Heartsick, he returned to his little house in Alo. Several days passed and no engagement took place. The sentinels stationed by King Niuliki on the mountain tops and at the entrances to the valleys reported no movement on the part of the enemy. In short, on both sides counsels of peace had for the moment prevailed. On the seventh of February the two kings met and while they dined together, sent for Father Chanel who pleaded with them to avoid war. It was decided that on the following day conditions of peace should be proposed and deliberated. Unfortunately, the men from Singave failed to appear, so nothing was settled.

King Niuliki wished Father Chanel to move to Poi, on the other side of the island, and farther from the territory of the conquered kingdom; but when reasons against the change were explained to him, he did not insist. However, the discomforts of his house in Alo grew greater, day by day, and he determined to build a larger one. He spoke of his plan to the king who gave his consent, remembering a day when, having fallen asleep in Father Chanel's cabin, he had been awakened by rain falling in his face. Work was commenced on the sixth of February, but as it happened, the new house was never finished. It was while the men were busy on it that the king of Singave came to Alo. "A great many people belonging to the other side of the island have never seen the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass," Father Chanel said in his journal; "And I was only too glad for some of them to have an opportunity of being present at it. The sight of my ivory Crucifix made a deep impression upon them. They were pleased, too, with the picture of the Blessed Virgin."

About this time a most unfortunate incident occurred. Niuliki, accompanied by some armed men,

came to Alo. While they searched for yams to cook for their meal, four of them came upon and seized the man who had killed the chief of Fikavi. Uttering fiendish cries of joy, they took him prisoner. Niuliki and his followers quickly decided that he should be put to death and lost no time in letting the men of Singave know of their intention. They, in their turn, sent word that if the prisoner were not released at once they would promptly invade King Niuliki's territory. Niuliki's answer was terse: "If you want the prisoner, come and free him." Women were stationed at many points to give the alarm as soon as anyone approached from Singave. All day they waited and watched in vain.

Towards noon of the next day, when they were no longer expected, "All the men of Singave came to the valley of Alo and placed nine roasted pigs before a house belonging to Niuliki. They then hastily made a litter, placed some trifle upon it, and after several warlike toasts had been proposed the litter was shouldered by four men whose cries reechoed through the valley as they bore it away. They were congratulating themselves on carrying with them the god of Niuliki. Hardly were they out of sight when the men and women of King Niuliki's party gathered about him, bent on war. The king and his advisers harangued the crowd, and kava was offered to the god who had been stolen."[1]

The conquerors were unwilling to be indebted to the conquered for anything, so they sent one of Niuliki's daughters and a woman of Maile, a village in Alo, to pay for the roasted pigs with an offering of some pieces of European cloth. What was their astonishment when the woman of Maile returned alone and told that the princess had been detained as a hostage. "This means war," Father Chanel wrote in his journal. "It is inevitable now, if God does not

[1]Journal, February 28, 1838.

prevent it by a miracle. Oh my God, have pity on this island!" Happily, on the following day, the king's daughter was allowed to return.

Five days later, the situation being unchanged, and no one able to foresee whether peace or war would be the outcome, Father Chanel resolved to profit by the approaching departure of a schooner which lay at anchor in the bay to go to Wallis. He had had no news of Father Bataillon since their separation, four months before. At first the king refused to allow him to make the trip, but later changed his mind and gave the desired permission.

A rough sea made the passage difficult. In his journal, Father Chanel notes, "On the twenty-seventh we sighted Wallis about noon. Natives came in crowds to meet us, and it seemed to me that they had improved in many ways. I asked instantly for news of the two Frenchmen who were living on the island and was told that they are beloved by all and looked upon as children of the king. Not a pin has been stolen from them." Writing to Brother Mary Nizier, he said, "We cast anchor at noon. I long to see Father Bataillon and Brother Joseph, but they tell me that, in compliance with the custom of Wallis, I must await them here. The sun is setting and my brothers have not come! * * * As I watched still longer, I heard French voices on the shore. Our canoe went for my friends, and a few moments later I was holding out my hands to help them aboard. Oh, they were Father Bataillon and Brother! What a joyous moment and what a happy evening!"

In his journal Father Chanel wrote some details of the visit. "We left the schooner early in the morning to go to Father Bataillon's little isolated house. Later, we set out to visit the king, whom we met on our way. He embraced me cordially, as a relative of Father Bataillon's. We detained him for a moment to give him a little flask of wine." This gift so warmed the heart of His Majesty that during the whole of his

visit Father Chanel was the object of the most delicate attentions of royalty.

"The king's affection for us was so great that he asked us to accompany him on a visit which he intended to make to the other side of the island," wrote Father Bataillon. "We accepted the invitation gratefully. To convert these people, is it not necessary to know them? The king's conversation was agreeable and instructive. He taught us much concerning the character, customs and industries of his subjects. After three or four hours of travel by boat we landed and entered the village which His Majesty had come to visit. It goes without saying that we were enthusiastically received.

"The king's friendship assured to us the good will of the chiefs; this was proven more than once. The prime minister sent us a quantity of provisions. Wherever we went they received us with honor, and when kava and other refreshments were passed we were far from being the last served. Father Chanel said to me, 'You will see that these people will soon become Christians;' and his prophecy was verified.

"During the first days of Father Chanel's visit we worked hard to finish the house we had begun to build. This done, our one thought was to plan what we had best to do for the speedy conversion of Wallis and Futuna. The language of the two islands was almost identical, and we studied it together and worked over the translation of the principal prayers, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Creed, etc. Because there were no words for many of our religious ideas we were obliged to invent them, holding as closely as possible to the genius of the Polynesian tongue. Tounghala was of great assistance in this important work and after overcoming many difficulties, we succeeded at last. The first step in the conversion of our islands had been taken, and we rejoiced with all ours hearts. We had then only to sow the divine

seed that it might germinate and in time bear fruit. God soon gave us an opportunity.

"On Holy Thursday, April twelfth, 1838, the anniversary of my First Communion, we rose early, and after blessing our new house, I prepared to say Mass. One of the king's brothers, following a custom all too popular on our island, had slept in our house the night before, and he begged to be permitted to assist at the Holy Sacrifice. We believed that the moment had come when it would be well publicly to display our holy religion, so we allowed him to be present. It would be impossible to describe his astonishment and admiration. 'Oh, how sweet and beautiful is your way of talking to God! I wish I could be of your religion!' he cried. Later, he did become a Christian.

"The evening of that same day we went to the smaller island to take to Tounghala some gifts sent him by the king. This young chief, always our best friend, questioned us closely about France, the religion practiced there, and our motive in having come to make our homes, one in Wallis, the other in Futuna. We replied unhesitatingly to the first two questions; we could only rise in his esteem by talking about the size, glory, strength, and immense wealth of our country, and by describing in glowing terms the beauty and magnificence of our churches and the grandeur of our chants and ceremonies. We told him of the God whom Christians adore and mentioned some of the most important facts in the history of the Jewish people and of the Church. In telling him all this, we had implicitly replied to his question, why we had come so far to settle in Oceania; but after interiorly invoking Jesus and Mary, we thought it would be well openly to explain our mission.

" 'In France,' we said, 'we have fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, friends and acquaintances who love us and grieved to see us leave them. God alone knows what the sacrifice cost us. But we said to ourselves: all men were bought by the blood of

Jesus Christ, and there are many who do not know it. It would be well for us to carry His name to countries still ignorant of It. It was solely to convert Wallis and Futuna to faith in the one true God and the Church which He founded that we said good-bye forever to all that we hold most dear.'

"These words touched the heart of the young chief. 'Your project,' he said, 'is as beautiful as the sun, and as great as the lofty trees we see about us. I approve of it and declare myself a Christian from this moment. But my influence is so small that I can be of little help to you. You must go higher. Go to the king; if he is converted the whole island will soon be yours.' After advising us how to broach the subject to His Majesty, he added, 'As for me, I will do all in my power to help you. You can always count on the strength of my arm.'

"It was nearly midnight and we were all beginning to feel the need of rest, but before lying down on our mats we thanked God for having given us an opportunity to announce His word and for having touched the heart of the young chief whose talents and influence would be of immense value to us. In the morning Tounghala referred to the conversation of the preceding night and assured us that he had no inclination to change his mind. We then returned to the king bearing his expressions of gratitude for the gifts, but to His Majesty we said nothing on the subject of religion. We thought it too soon to make an effort to convert him; instead, we prayed and waited until Providence provided a suitable occasion. Five days later, on Wednesday in Easter week, our prayers were answered.

"I had just finished my Mass and Father Chanel was making ready to say his, when the king came to see us. We begged him to excuse us, for the moment, because we were occupied with our religious exercises. 'May I be permitted to see them?' he asked, in a beseeching tone which showed that he thought they

would give him great pleasure. We assured him that he would be welcome and took him and his companion to our poor little chapel. Father Chanel began his Mass at once and said it with the deep reverence and devotion which characterized him. And Oh, how we begged God to help us! The king watched every movement of the priest with intense interest and was astonished beyond power of words to describe. 'How beautiful your religion is! How much better than ours!' he seemed to say to himself.

"After Mass His Majesty thanked us profusely for having permitted him to be present, and he told every one whom he met during the day of all that he had seen early in the morning in our cabin. His vocabulary furnished no words glowing enough to express his enthusiasm, so he tried by means of expressive gestures and picturesque comparisons to give what he said was but a faint idea of the reality. A number of natives, whose curiosity and interest had been aroused by his description, begged that they, also, might be allowed to assist at Mass. The king came often, and from the day when he first heard Mass, without in the least understanding it, he showed us increased esteem and affection."

The two apostles made journeys to different parts of the island to learn where there were any sick. Father Bataillon loved to recall, in after years, the ease with which Father Chanel lifted his heart to God during those long walks, thanking Him for the beauty that surrounded them and for His bounty in so lavishly supplying the island with trees and plants useful to man.

But the hour of separation drew near. The schooner which had carried Father Chanel to Wallis was about to return to Futuna. The captain named April tenth as the day of his departure, but unfavorable winds made it impossible for him to set sail before the twenty-sixth.

"Thanks to this delay," Father Bataillon related, "we were able to spend some days together on the smaller island, where we baptized a dying child and a man who was dangerously ill. During this visit we talked openly of our religion, not only to Tounghala, but to all his people and some natives of Vavao. As these latter had heard the ministers we tried to show them the difference between Protestantism and Catholicity. God deigned to bless our words. Tounghala and the whole assembly denounced the heretical doctrines of Protestantism and earnestly told us that they longed to become Catholics.

"The next day the young chief, ever more and more eager to hear God's word, asked us to explain some points on which we had touched but lightly. When we said that, ordinarily, singing forms a part of our ceremonies he wished to hear one of our hymns. He and his friends had never heard anything better than the melodious, but very monotonous music of Wallis, so it was not difficult to fill them with intense admiration of our singing. We left them congratulating themselves that missionaries of the true Faith had come to their island in preference to many others larger and more beautiful."

CHAPTER XII.

The Progress of The Mission.

At noon, on April twenty-seventh, Father Chanel sighted his dear Futuna, which he was destined never to leave again. The captain was unable to cast anchor before nine o'clock in the evening, but long before, a number of natives had boarded the schooner. "Have you made peace?" was Father Chanel's first question. "Yes, several days ago," they told him. "There was but one battle, fought on the fifth of April. Shortly afterward, some of King Niuliki's friends treacherously killed a man of Singave, and as some one had then been killed on each side, we thought we could have peace." Father Chanel was overjoyed. Normal conditions being restored, he thought he would be able to interest the islanders in the Faith.

During his absence Brother Mary Nizier had lived in the little island of Alofi with Thomas Boog. As soon as he learned of the return of the schooner he went quickly to Singave. "How happy I was to clasp Father Chanel's hands after a month's separation from him!" the good Brother wrote; and continued, repeating the news, just as he had told it to Father Chanel, "We are not to go back to our little cabin in Alo. A few days after peace was concluded King Niuliki came to our valley, and in spite of the protests made by Thomas Boog and me, he had our belongings taken to his house in Poi. All he would say in reply to our objections was, 'If Father Chanel on his return prefers to live in Alo, his things can be carried back again.'"

Father Chanel decided that it would be well for him to live in Poi, near the king, that he might have more frequent opportunities of talking to him of the Faith he had come so far to preach.

To Father Bataillon he wrote, "The king welcomed me cordially, and every one I see smiles and makes signs of salutation. There has been one feast after another ever since we came to Poi. * * * Pray for me that I may make progress in learning the language and may soon dare to tell my islanders why I have come into their midst."

His few possessions had been put in a corner of Niuliki's house, very near to its most sacred place between the two principal columns, which spot was so deeply venerated by the Futunians that they would not have walked across it for all the gold in the world. They believed that by doing so they would incur the anger of the great god, Fakavelikele. The larger of the two columns, called the divine column, was held in such reverence that any one who even touched it, was thought to be in danger of instant death. Father Chanel, still ignorant of many of the ridiculous superstitions of the island, knew nothing of this one. Wishing to say Mass as often as possible, he erected his altar against this column in what seemed to be the best place for it. Brother Mary Nizier wrote a little account of the matter: "Big nails were driven into the column, from which our holy water font and crucifix were suspended—and it was forbidden to touch it with the tip of a finger! I think I remember that while we were at work the king uttered some exclamations of surprise, or perhaps, of indignation, but he did not attempt to stop us. Was he afraid we would mock at his superstition? Or was it respect for Father Chanel that kept him from interfering?"

By the evening of May fifth, all was ready for the Mass of the following day, feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph. In his journal Father Chanel wrote on the sixth, "I had the consolation of offering the Holy

Sacrifice of the Mass for the first time in this part of the island. The king's house was my church. The king was so much pleased that he invited all the people of the valley to be present. I was delighted with the silence that reigned during the whole of the Divine Sacrifice. There was no sound except the crying of the little children—which mattered little as I had no other choir!"

He had often deplored the unfair bargains made between the captains of vessels which stopped at the island and the unsophisticated natives; and writing to Father Bataillon on the twenty-second of May, he spoke sadly of the coming of an English whaler, the *Matilda:* "My poor people gave away, rather than sold, their goods. Many cocoanuts were exchanged for one pipe. Three big fat hogs and a hundred yams for a gun. I am happy to say they bought only one. I should be very sorry to see fire-arms and powder brought here. Our new-made peace would not last long.

"We are living in the king's house," he continued, "but many marriage feasts have kept His Majesty away most of the time. I do not know how long this will last. There are always a good many people about us and we can do very little work. I cannot say Mass as often as I wish. I envy you the privacy of your house. God's will be done!

"I have not yet had the consolation of making any converts. After a dance in one of Niuliki's houses, chief Tolomea made an address to the people in which he said that the islands of Vavao, Haapi, Tonga, and many others which he mentioned have become Christian; Wallis and Futuna alone still hold to the old religion. The king of Wallis, Lavelua, had charged him to say to Niuliki that it would be unwise of these two islands to follow the example of the rest. I hear that the people agreed with him in this, as in everything else that he said. Whatever comes I ask only to know the language. God will do the rest."

Two days later, on Ascension Thursday, there was hardly any one present when he began his Mass, but a number of people came to watch before it was finished. "After Mass we sang the *Laudate Dominum* and the *Regina Coeli,* which were subjects of conversation for the remainder of the day.[1] Emboldened by this little success, on the vigil of Pentecost he spread the word, through all the adjoining valleys, that on the following day he would celebrate a great feast. He rose early, but the natives were early, too, and watched him and Brother Mary Nizier make the necessary preparations for the Holy Sacrifice. "As we put each thing in place there were exclamations of admiration on all sides. The king who had just gone out made haste to return. Fathers, mothers, and children crowded around us, all in a good humor. As soon as we began the *Veni Creator* there was absolute silence, and the people continued to be quiet and attentive throughout the whole of High Mass and while we sang the *Laudate Dominum* and the *Regina Coeli.* We left the altar as it was for a little while to satisfy the natives, who had never seen anything like it and would have enjoyed looking at it all day long. It is the Crucifix that always impresses them most deeply."[2] While the *Veni Creator* was being sung a violent storm broke over the island, threatening to overturn the king's house. "I suppose that was the 'mighty wind' of Pentecost," Father Chanel said smilingly to Brother Mary Nizier, after the people had gone.

The king was delighted with all that Father Chanel did on Pentecost Sunday; in fact, he had lavished smiles and favors upon him ever since his return from Wallis and would gladly have granted his request for a cabin of his own if the natives had not been too busy to think of building one. He offered him a certain part of his own house which could be partitioned off from the rest, indicating exactly how much space

[1]Journal, May 24, 1838.
[2]Journal, June 3, 1838.

he might have. Father Chanel accepted this offer gratefully and arranged his new home as quickly as possible. In it he had the quiet necessary for his prayers and his studies and the joy of saying Mass nearly every day.

He hung several large pictures on the walls of this room. The natives, who came in ever growing crowds to see his quarters, looked with awe and admiration at them, marvelling over the skill of the white people. It was an *Ecce Homo* which interested them most. Their curiosity to see a lamp burn attracted the children and even many grown people, and all these visits had a salutary influence. Father Chanel wrote in his journal, "Some who have seen us make the Sign of the Cross try to imitate us. A woman, related to the king, came to me and asked if she might take the name Blessed Mary, which she had heard us give to the Blessed Virgin. I told her that the word Blessed is reserved for the Mary whose picture she had seen, but that she might be called Mary. She was quite satisfied." Two young girls, relatives of Thomas Boog's first wife, had the happy idea of giving Father Chanel a wreath of flowers for the picture of the Blessed Virgin. He noted with joy this first gift ever offered to Mary in Futuna.

It grieved him deeply that the natives did not always tell him when any one was ill. "Just as we were going to dinner I had the sorrow of learning of the death of a young man on the other side of the island. God's will be done! But such things as this make my heart bleed. I have it in my power to save these poor souls, and hell snatches them from me!" And a few days later he wrote in his journal, "About three o'clock this morning I overheard them say that some one was ill and the gods were going to eat him, meaning that he would die. I went at once to see him. Before I reached the end of the valley I heard cries and sobs that startled me. I hurried to the house and found there the body of a young man who had just

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH AT CUET

died of consumption. He had been ill for two months and I had not known it." Many times he had occasion to make similar entries in his journal, though he was sometimes able to baptize dying children and even adults.

On June eighteenth, 1838, he wrote, "The king told me of a sick child in Laloa, on the other side of the island. I went there in all haste. The baby was asleep in the arms of a blind old woman. I drew near and caressed her gently, but she did not notice me. After sprinkling a few drops of perfumed oil about the room, I got some water with which I baptized the child, giving her the name, Mary Marcella. Afterwards I asked the baby's name, and they told me it was Vehe. To allay all suspicion I repeated it and the names of all who were standing near. On the way home I recited the *Te Deum* again and again in thanksgiving."

Writing to Father Bataillon of this joy, he said that he intended to give to each person he baptized the name of the Queen of Heaven and of the saint of the day. A child whom he had the happiness to baptize on the thirty-first of July he called Mary Ignatius. Learning of her death, not long afterward, he wrote exultingly, "What joy I feel to have opened heaven to that soul! I thank God again and again. We think it more prudent not to suggest Christian burial, because none of the natives know that she was baptized and there are some who, if they did know, would lay her death at my door."

On August twenty-third, when unvesting after Mass, he heard weeping and wailing not far from the king's house. "I went quickly in the direction whence the sounds came, until I reached a house crowded with men and women, all of them covered with blood from having savagely torn their faces. An old woman was very ill, and blood from her husband's self-inflicted wounds made her frightful to behold. It was a long time before I could make myself heard, for the peo-

ple's cries drowned my voice. At last I succeeded in begging and obtaining permission to speak to the sick woman, and I asked her if she would not like to become a Christian before she died. Added to my grief of not being able to explain our fundamental doctrines very well, I had that of hearing the poor old soul answer no, to everything I suggested. I could only go away, saying goodbye to those who still stood near the bed. The crowd had dwindled; all the men were gone, and there remained in the house only some women and a few children.

"At noon I went back. I showed that I was surprised that they had given the old woman nothing to drink and were taking no care of her. My interest seemed to touch her; she looked at me more kindly, and I took advantage of her softened attitude to speak to her again of our religion. This time she listened willingly. I tried every means I knew to teach her the most important articles of faith, and suggested some little aspirations. I went away, then, telling her that I would see her again after an hour.

"On my return she looked at me confidingly and took my hand in hers, telling me that she had had food and drink in my absence. I continued my instruction and in the end baptized her. Her name is Mary Ann." Father Chanel saw her the following day and noted in his journal that she was happy to have become a Christian. She died on the twenty-seventh of August and was buried the next morning. "The vehement grief of the natives prevented my insisting on Christian burial. I contented myself with saying Mass for the repose of her soul."

These baptisms were the first fruits of the mission of Futuna. Heaven was richer for the harvest, and who can say how much the little island owes to the prayers of Mary Marcella, Mary Ignatius and Mary Ann?

Whenever an opportunity presented itself, he spoke of Christ and of His church, and little by little the

people became interested. "Some of the natives say that they wish to become Christians. I do not build on all they say, but from day to day I can see a change in them," he wrote. When a young man told him that the king and the most influential among the chiefs did not wish to become Christians themselves and would not allow any one else to do so, he noted the words in his journal and added, by way of comment, "God is the master of all hearts and can convert the most obstinate."

He was careful not to neglect the people of conquered Singave. "Sam's father, an old chief, called Touri-Vao, was brought here during Mass," he wrote one day. "He was perfectly quiet. After making a short thanksgiving I asked him if what he had seen was not beautiful. He said, yes. I told him how much I should like to do the same thing in Singave if I could have a house there, and asked if this would be possible. He said that it would; so I commissioned him to tell the other chiefs on his side of the island that, if they were willing, after Thomas Boog finished our house in Poi he would build one like it in Singave. Touri-Vao said that this would be well, and then he went away."

Father Chanel had already obtained permission to build a home in Poi for himself and Brother Mary Nizier, and Thomas Boog was beginning to work upon it. This house, twenty-four feet long by thirteen wide, simple as it was, became the wonder of the island, as Father Chanel wrote in one of his letters to Europe. He blessed it on the fifth of September, and at once moved into it. In its peaceful seclusion he made his yearly retreat, having been unable to do so before the feast of the Assumption, as the rule of the Society prescribes, because at that time he was living in the midst of the confusion of the king's household.

The natives celebrated the completion of Father Chanel's new house by a great feast in honor of the gods. The opening of the festivities was announced

by the beating of a drum and many toasts to their deities. The king had invited every one on the conquered side of the island, and he graciously offered kava to a chief of Singave. Provisions were brought from all the valleys and spread before Niuliki; the prime minister then said a prayer, and at its close, by order of His Majesty, the food was distributed among the chiefs of all the valleys and through them to the heads of the various families. After the feasting, dancing commenced, and as long as it continued girls from fifteen to twenty years of age, chosen from the royal family and those of the chiefs, stood near the king in places of honor. They wore their best clothes and were resplendent with red and black paint. Each valley had its own group, and these groups replaced one another from time to time, the representatives of the more important places taking precedence over those from the smaller.

Feasts in honor of the gods were held whenever a favor, or relief from some scourge, was greatly desired. In October thirteenth Father Chanel noted in his journal, "Public prayers were offered to-day that the wind may subside. It is ruining the banana trees. The prayers began late in the afternoon and are to be offered to the god of Maligi, the prime minister. They will be continued for only twenty-four hours." When offered to the king's god they lasted for seven days and were concluded by a great religious feast.

In spite of these pagan celebrations the good dispositions, of which Father Chanel had spoken with so much hope, grew stronger slowly, but perceptibly. Several natives went so far as to tell him that they longed to become Christians. "God grant they mean what they say!" he exclaimed.[1] Baptisms became more frequent. A child whom he had baptized died in Alofi, and he wrote happily, "My two little islands have sent some souls to heaven. Oh my God, increase their number!"

[1]Journal, October 13, 1838.

The house at Singave for which Father Chanel had longed that he might be able to say Mass within the territory of the Conquered, was begun in January, 1839. A month later his house at Poi, the pride of all Futuna, was destroyed by the wind. "For several days the sky looked threatening and the wind was strong; at last the storm burst in all its fierce fury. During a whole night rain fell in torrents, the ocean roared, the lightning and thunder were terrible, and the frightened natives shrieked wildly to their gods. At daybreak the wind veered to the north and redoubled in violence. Half dressed we struggled to support our house against the fury of the storm, but in spite of our efforts we saw our roof carried away, piece by piece. Our walls were shaken, until they could bear no more, and crumbled to the ground, leaving us shelterless—homeless. Few houses on the island escaped the fate of ours, and the cocoanut and banana trees and all varieties of trees suffered so severely that famine threatened. To stave it off the natives worked tirelessly, and their patient courage accomplished wonders."[1]

"Under such circumstances theft is openly countenanced, and we lost some of our things," he wrote to Father Colin. The king commanded that they should be returned and saw to it that his order was obeyed. Father Chanel carried his belongings to Niuliki's house, which had suffered comparatively little from the storm, and some days later he had built a little cabin twelve feet long by six or seven wide to live in until it should become possible to erect a larger on the site of the wrecked one.

To the ravages made by the storm, war soon threatened to add more terrible ones. On the eve of the disaster of February second, as Father Chanel wrote to Father Convers, "The people of the conquered kingdom presented ten roasted pigs to two impostors belonging to King Niuliki's party, whom they look

[1]Letter to Father Convers.

upon as oracles of the gods. Their aim was to attract these men to their own valley and thus strengthen themselves by the addition of a number of gods, so that in time they may be able to regain the supremacy of the island. The ruse was understood and deeply resented. King Niuliki and his men swore vengeance. They pursued those who had brought the pigs, overtook them, and but for the clemency of His Majesty all would have been put to death. He contented himself with making them beg pardon."

This happy solution of the trouble made it possible for Father Chanel to continue his journeys back and forth over the island. He was unwearied in his visits. On the twentieth of February he was in Assou-Vele where he found a man ill with a serious form of throat trouble. He judged it to be incurable, and determined that in the weeks left to the poor invalid he would try to instruct him sufficiently to administer baptism, if the man were willing. He went to Singave on the twenty-fifth and visited the various valleys there, speaking of the faith to as many as a hundred persons and having a long and serious talk with Sam. The old king, Vanae, asked many questions and declared himself pleased with Father Chanel's replies. Returning to Assou-Vele, he found Tui-Karepa, the sick man, worse than when he had seen him before. He talked to him and his friends about Christianity and succeeded in arousing their interest. The impostors supposed to be loved by the gods suggested many remedies for his throat, some of them supremely ridiculous, but nothing helped him. His condition grew more and more alarming, and his grief-stricken relatives carried him to a house thought to be favored by a god, but with no result. As long as Tui-Karepa was surrounded, day and night, by his friends it was impossible to instruct him, but he was not in immediate danger, so Father Chanel went back to Singave where his first visit was to a young man who was very ill. "I found him in danger of death and asked

him if he would not like to become a Christian. He replied that he was too tired to talk. Later, with the help of Thomas Boog, to whom I spoke in my broken English and who translated what I said, I explained to him the truths necessary for salvation. I went away, then, and when I returned, he said that he wished to become a Christian, and his whole family echoed his words. I baptized him, giving him the name Peter, and on leaving, told him to say often, 'Have mercy on me, Lord God, for I wish to go to heaven.' "[1]

On the following day he saw his neophyte again. "His condition has not changed," he wrote, "His relatives are resigned. I spoke but little to the sick man for fear of tiring him, but talked for a long time to his father and to some natives whom I met as I came away."[2]

In the house of King Vanae Father Chanel saw a girl who was an invalid, but apparently not in danger of death. He resolved to try to convert her, and great was his sorrow when, the next day, Thomas Boog told him that she had died suddenly and was already buried. In the hour of her agony she had begged those about her to go for the missionary because she wanted to become a Christian so she could go to heaven. These were her last words. "How sad I am over this news! God grant that baptism of desire made her soul pleasing in His sight and opened heaven to her!" he wrote in his journal.

After visiting his neophyte once more he left Singave, happy because he felt that the people there were well disposed towards Christianity. All wanted to go to heaven, as they expressed it. When he reached home Brother Mary Nizier told him that Maligi and other natives had shown a friendly attitude towards the Faith. Father Chanel wrote joyfully, "Before a large assembly, the prime minister did not hesitate

[1]Journal, March 13, 1839.
[2]Journal, March 15, 1839.

to say that the religion we have brought to Futuna is good; that it teaches men how to reach heaven and to avoid hell. May God bless these first changes of heart!"

Meanwhile Tui-Karepa had grown worse despite many offerings to the gods. Through a beating rain Father Chanel went to see him, and, profiting by a moment when most of his friends were away, spoke to him of baptism. "Tui-Karepa listened eagerly to all I had to say. His father who was standing by, asked me to tell him of the sufferings and death of the Man whose image he had seen on my crucifix. I did so; and afterward tried to teach Tui-Karepa something concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation and our Redemption. He begged me to baptize him, and I did so, telling him to make an act of love of God as I poured the saving water on his head. He was happy, then, to know that his soul had become pleasing in God's sight and heaven was assured to him. I taught him a little invocation to the Blessed Virgin before I left him, and he thanked me and begged me to come again."[1] He died a few days later before Father Chanel had found time to go to Assoa-Vele again and was buried with the usual Futunian ceremonies. Not long afterward his father asked for a cross which he wished to place upon Tui-Karepa's grave.

About this time Father Chanel baptized two more dying children. Thus, slowly, very slowly, his work progressed. His flock in heaven was growing; the sheepfold on earth was still empty.

One day when he was busy about his ordinary work in the little house at Poi a native burst in upon him, hot and breathless, to tell him that his relatives had landed at Singave. Father Chanel hurried to meet the visitors, having no idea who they were and found Fathers Baty, Epalle and Petit, and Brothers Augustine, Elias, and Florentine. Father Bataillon was

[1]Journal, March 21, 1839.

with them. What a surprise and what joy! At first words failed him, but recovering himself quickly, he welcomed them and listened eagerly to the story of their journey from France to Futuna.

"My surprise was as great as yours," Father Bataillon told him. "Like you, I could not utter a word at first. After they had told me such news as I could not wait to hear, I hastened to take them to the king. He had been a little distant with me for some time and seemed embarrassed, but presently recovered himself and all went well. Knowing that their schooner, the *Queen of Peace,* was to leave almost immediately, he asked me to come as far as Futuna in search of some of his subjects who fled in a canoe. For the sake of my mission I could not refuse to do him a service which would delay our brothers' arrival in New Zealand by only eight or ten days. Besides, for them and for me, it is a great joy to see you and Brother Mary Nizier." While Father Bataillon talked "a crowd had gathered about the strangers. The natives seemed almost as happy as we. A little dinner was ordered to celebrate the occasion."[1]

Father Epalle, afterwards consecrated Bishop of Sion, wrote to Father Bourdin, "I shall always remember the days we spent with the first apostle of Futuna. He had worked a year and a half for the conversion of his pagan and cannibal island, with no help but what a young lay-brother could give. I saw again that angel of peace and love whom I thought to have parted from forever when he left France. What a pleasant surprise to his loving heart and what happiness for mine! How I was edified by his amiable simplicity! His smiling face, his modesty, his sweet gaiety, all betrayed to me the peace and joy of his soul.

"Before we reached his house some one told him of the arrival of a party of Europeans, and he came running to meet us. We went at once to his tiny

[1]Journal, May 8, 1839.

cabin. It was not like the holy house of Nazareth, which though poor, had some simple furniture, some cooking utensils; it was not like the room of the Prophet Elias, for that contained a little bed, a chair, a table, and a candlestick; Father Chanel's house was bare except for an altar of rough wood. Pebbles gathered on the beach formed the floor. The trunk of a tree, which extended the width of the house along the wall, served as a pillow at night and a seat by day. There was also a 'tape;' that is, a piece of cloth made from the papyrus plant, used to cover him and Brother Mary Nizier while they slept to protect them from the myriads of mosquitoes that infest the island. His clothes were in rags. For the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice he had only what was strictly necessary. We saw, too, a few agricultural implements and the axe which became the instrument of his martyrdom.

"His poor hut was made of bamboo and stubble from the marshes. The innumerable knots in the bamboo had made it impossible to join the pieces closely, so windows were unnecessary and none had been made. As to its size, what can I say? All that I know is that in the evening we nine missionaries squatted on the floor and talked far into the night, and when at last we lay down, side by side, with our heads on the trunk of the tree, there was not an inch of free space in the cabin.

"This little house was in a valley close to the sea, and had a garden planted with orange trees and vines still too young to bear fruit; but I noticed some banana trees heavily laden.

"There being neither kitchen nor food in the cabin it was easy to forget the meal hour, but in time my hunger became so keen that I could not refrain from saying something about it. Dear Father Chanel smilingly replied that the feast would be truly royal, both as to the number and quality of its dishes, but the hour at which it would be served depended on the

appetite of His Majesty. This sounded a little mysterious, but soon we heard some one call loudly. The cry proved to be the king's; he was summoning us to dinner. We went to the royal palace, or rather to the smoky hut of the king who later decreed the death of our saintly brother. The meal consisted of roots and yams; food which satisfied hunger for the moment but was not nourishing. And this was Father Chanel's ordinary diet!"

On the next day, Ascension Thursday, four Masses were said in the little cabin, and a fifth was sung by Father Bataillon in Niuliki's house before a great number of natives who did not know how to express their surprise and admiration. He took advantage of the occasion to say a few words about the Faith. On Saturday, Fathers Baty and Petit and the three lay-brothers went with Father Chanel to Singave to make the necessary preparations for their departure on the *Queen of Peace*. The three priests said Mass there on Sunday, May twelfth, in Father Chanel's newly completed house, which had never before been used. The natives were present in crowds at all the Masses. It was the same on the following day. The chapel emptied a little, only to be refilled.

The missionaries decided that the *Queen of Peace* should not return to Wallis, but proceed at once to New Zealand, after they had celebrated Pentecost together with all possible solemnity for God's greater glory and the edification of the islanders. They decorated the chapel at Singave as prettily as they could. "The most beautiful thing we had, and one which the natives came from far and near to admire, was a robe that we used on the statue of Our Lady of Fourvière. I am constantly reminding the Blessed Virgin of this."[1]

At Mass on Pentecost Sunday a small organ, brought on the *Queen of Peace,* was used for the first time, to the delight of the islanders who had never

[1]Journal, May 18, 1839.

heard anything so sweet. "My people," Father Chanel wrote, "were deeply moved by the majesty of our ceremonies, the grandeur and beauty of our holy religion, and the zeal and charity of her ministers. The little presents which my brothers distributed aroused intense gratitude, and many of the people wept to hear them tell of the interest in their welfare felt in France and all over Europe." In the evening of that same day the schooner set sail for New Zealand, carrying with it all the visiting missionaries except Father Bataillon.

"During every minute of our stay with the apostle of Futuna we were edified by Father Chanel's piety, sweetness, resignation, and good advice," wrote Father Epalle. "Neither the length of his frequent journeys about the island, nor the bad condition of such paths as there were, nor the savage customs of his people, nor the ever-recurring wars which divided them, could cool the ardor of his zeal.

"We thought that in virtue of his authority as Pro-vicar Apostolic he would keep one of us with him and take some money from the fund we had brought with us—not a great sum, it is true, but we were perfectly willing to share it. We placed ourselves and all we had in his hands, but he would accept nothing. 'God has taken care of me until to-day, and I know His help will never fail me. Perhaps, some day, He will send me a helper. Dear friends, go to the missions assigned you, and do not forget me in your prayers.'

"We begged him to accept part of our money. 'No, though I thank you with all my heart,' he said. 'I have put all my trust in God, and He has never taken better care of me than since I came to Futuna.' He looked upon Bishop Pompallier as the interpreter of God's will in his regard, and wished to accept neither money nor helper except through his hands."

The visiting missionaries had brought with them many letters for Father Chanel from friends in Eu-

rope, and he answered some of them at once that they might begin their long journey with the departure of the *Queen of Peace*. The most important among them was the account of his mission which he sent to Father Colin. "It was with indescribable joy that after living for eighteen months in Futuna, I received a visit from the first apostolic band which you, in your goodness, sent to reinforce us," he said; then, having narrated in a few words the principal events which had occurred, he continued, "The island is not yet Christian. Besides my lack of zeal there are a thousand fears and prejudices in the way. The natives hear that the newly converted of Tonga, Haapai, Vavao, Samoa, Tahiti, and other islands have been ill used.

"Twenty baptisms, three of adults, the rest of infants and all in danger of death, make the whole harvest garnered in eighteen months. But we have the consolation of seeing the savage ways of the islanders soften a little, day by day. His Lordship did not return at the end of six months, as he planned to do, and as Brother Mary Nizier and I had said that he would, so we were looked upon as liars or abandoned men until the arrival of our brothers of the Society. Their coming had the best possible effect on our little world. All were eager to see them and to learn their names. Every word they said was listened to with pleasure, and the poor natives were touched to hear that far-away France is interested in them. They are never weary repeating, *'Malie Farani.'* (The French are good.)"

Father Bataillon wrote in his journal, "After our friends left us to continue their journey to New Zealand, our first care was to build a better cabin. We surrounded it with a lattice made of bamboo. It has windows and doors and is divided into several rooms, the largest of them, eight feet long by six wide, being used for a chapel.

"We gave much time, too, to the study of the Futunian language and adapted to it all I had written

for Wallis in regard to doctrine as well as some prayers and sacred songs. Father Chanel begged me to compose a hymn in honor of Our Lady, as even for Wallis I had nothing of the sort, and I made a kind of paraphrase of the Hail Mary with some thoughts borrowed from the *Salve Regina*."

Together the missionaries visited poor little Alofi whose picturesque beauty enchanted Father Bataillon. But in the midst of its natural loveliness the hearts of the missionaries were sad, for on every side they found traces of once populous villages, laid waste, and as silent and lonely as a desert. They went also to every part of the larger island in quest of the sick and dying and of opportunities to instruct the people, especially in public. "One day," as Father Chanel wrote to Father Convers, "Father Bataillon proposed to the king that we should burn a number of gods of the second order, greatly feared in Futuna and the neighboring islands. Niuliki and the chiefs consented, feeling certain that we would not dare to do such a thing. But the next day we publicly burned their ridiculous gods, or rather, objects consecrated to their worship. The natives, afraid for us and for themselves, stood far from the fire, and when all was over and they saw that we were alive and unharmed, they did not know how to express all their surprise and admiration. This 'prodigy' has greatly lowered the prestige of the false gods. Two whole villages asked to be prepared for baptism; and the king assures me that he is only putting off his conversion until the whole island declares itself in favor of Christianity. All seem to be well disposed towards us."

Knowing that the conversion of the king would be followed by that of many more, the two apostles bent every energy to effect it. They had more than one long serious talk with him, but His Majesty, though impressed, was unwilling to commit himself.

After two months sojourn in Futuna, Father Bataillon returned to Wallis. He was eager to be once more

in the midst of his catechumens, fearing that a longer absence would discourage them. To Brother Joseph Xavier, his companion, Father Chanel sent a beautiful letter, from which the following extracts are taken:

"I am certain that you will neglect no means that may help you to persevere. We are all working for one reward, heaven. Let us waste no time on useless things; by doing so we expose ourselves to the danger of missing our end. Eternity will be quite long enough to rest us and repay us a hundredfold for the sufferings of this short life. * * *

"My dear little sister (Sister St. Dominic) has gone to heaven ahead of me. She died at Easter-time in 1838. Perhaps some day she will reproach me with not having wept for her. I will say that I could not, in spite of all my tender love.

"My mission has met with fewer obstacles than Father Bataillon's, but is not more flourishing. The trials which your work in Wallis has suffered augur well for the future. Pray without ceasing and do all in your power to second Father Bataillon's efforts for the conversion of the island. You see that he does not spare himself."

The bright hopes for Futuna, which had cheered the hearts of both valiant apostles, soon gave place to great uneasiness. Semouou and Ourvou, the two oracles to whom the men of Singave had brought presents in the preceding February, profited by the celebration of a feast to go to Singave and plot there for the overthrow of Niuliki. The result was that during the night of July tenth a band of young men crossed the mountain and came as far as Tutafa, in King Niuliki's territory, to revenge themselves on two natives of Tahiti who had cheated them in a trade. Failing to find the men whom they sought they fired at random into a group of people from Tahiti and fled precipitately. The war cry resounded on all sides and instantly every one in Tutafa was on the alert. The

old men tried to restrain the younger who were bent on pursuing their rash enemies.

Old and feeble as he was, Vanae, king of the conquered part of Futuna, clung to the hope of regaining his supremacy. Semouou and Ourvou promised him the favor of the gods and foretold great changes on the island, but they counseled prudence. Word was promptly sent by King Niuliki's people that Vanae's challenge to war had been accepted.

Father Chanel went in haste to Vaise and asked Vanae for an explanation of what had happened. "There is question only of a quarrel between some of our young men and a few natives of Tahiti," the conquered king said. Not satisfied with this reply Father Chanel ran to Poi where he found Niuliki and his people making a Para, or great war crown of white feathers, for His Majesty. War was inevitable; only Father Chanel still hoped for peace.

Becoming more and more alarmed as the hours passed, he went back to Singave to warn the people of the evils that accompany war and the eternal unhappiness of those who die without becoming Christians. Vanae led him to his house, and what was Father Chanel's astonishment when he saw, upon the king's throne, a piece of cloth and three leaves from a cocoanut tree! He was told that this religious symbol was an invitation to Fakelikele to come and rest in the midst of that pretty foliage. On the following day the chiefs and the old men gathered in his house and solemnly crowned Vanae, who then distributed pieces of parchment among the chiefs, to signify that they were restored to their old dignity. Kava was served with the ceremonial reserved to the conquerors. By an offering of a hog, encircled by baskets of fruit, Fakelikele was thanked for having graciously willed to quit the other side of the island and establish himself on theirs. After a prodigal distribution of provisions, the people sang and danced until evening.

At Singave, Futuna - The Church

King Vanae had forbidden any one to explain the ceremony of the crowning to Father Chanel, and not understanding that war was both certain and close at hand, he continued to plead for peace, his tender heart full of sadness and of great pity for his people. "I besought them, I threatened them with the divine anger, I reminded them of the horrors of war, but their only answer was, 'We do not want to be called the Conquered, when the great missionary (Bishop Pompallier) comes to visit us. As soon as we are conquerors we will all become Christians.' Poor fools! I could see that they were confident of victory because of the gods who had come to their camp with the two impostors."[1]

Returning to Poi on the second of August, he found King Niuliki's people also celebrating the peculiar feasts which meant that war was at hand, and his anxiety deepened and his heart ached even more sorely; then five days passed quietly during which the men resumed their ordinary occupations and worked industriously. Father Chanel gave himself up to prayer. He began a novena and a retreat, both of which were to be concluded on the feast of the Assumption.

During these days the men of Singave managed to buy some guns, and early in the morning of August tenth, confident of the victory promised by the gods, they marched against King Niuliki's forces assembled at Fikavi. For a little while the armies faced each other across a narrow stream, both leaders hesitating. Then, as Father Chanel wrote to Father Bataillon, "Some shots from the conquered side wounded several men of Niuliki's army—and war had begun in earnest. 'Let us forget the wounded and hasten to defeat our enemies!' the king cried. He charged, followed by his men, but Vanae's troops sustained the shock with so much firmness and courage that it looked for the moment as if victory were to be theirs. Not discouraged, Niuliki and his followers charged again. Re-

[1]Letter to Father Convers.

pulsed a second time, they decided to attack on three sides simultaneously. This manoeuvre succeeded. Soon it became impossible for the men of Singave to use their guns and a terrible hand to hand struggle followed. The young men of Singave were first to yield. They fled precipitately and most of their elders fell victims of their desertion.

"They say that Sam was the last of King Vanae's men left on the battlefield. He was fighting valiantly and did not see that all his friends had taken flight. Unable to load his gun he used it to parry the lances of his enemies. Four men surrounded him, and he held three of them at bay; the fourth succeeded in wounding him in the left leg. Throwing aside his gun, he drew the lance from his wound and defended himself with it. He did not run until his friends called to him that the men of Singave were hopelessly defeated."

In another letter Father Chanel said, "Old King Vanae was killed in the struggle, he who had had himself crowned conqueror-king but a few days before. One of the two impostors who brought on the war fell, also, and an Englishman, newly arrived in Futuna, who had openly espoused the cause of the Conquered, and the greater number of the lesser chiefs. Twenty-four men were killed on King Vanae's side and thirteen on King Niuliki's: a large number when we take into account the very small population of Futuna."

To Father Bataillon he wrote further details: "All was quiet at Poi, and we had no suspicion of what was occurring, when a messenger from the king came breathless into our valley and begged us to go and help to care for the victims of the struggle. We ran as fast as we could. The battlefield was a scene of horror. On every side there were wounded and dying men, and beside them crouched their wives covered with blood from their wounds. While we were dressing wounds King Niuliki came, supported by his wife and one of his daughters. A lance had ploughed

its way across his back, from shoulder to shoulder, making a painful but not dangerous wound. He was weak and sad, and we gave him a few drops of brandy as a stimulant."

"I gave conditional baptism to two men who died when the lances were drawn from their sides. The soldiers of Singave carried with them as many of their wounded as they could," he noted in his journal; and later, writing to Father Convers, he told, "Night was coming on, and Brother and I had done what we could. Overcome with grief and weariness we sat on the sand at the foot of a cocoanut tree. I could still hear the wailing of those whose relatives had fallen, and I myself could only moan, praying to God for these people who have become my people, and whose salvation is entrusted to me. Oh, how long the tropical nights seem in times of sorrow! For a little while we slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, but were awakened by the noise made by our islanders, who began to carry the bodies of the dead to an adjoining valley. All were buried there, except King Vanae, whose wife had taken him elsewhere, and the man *who had a god*. The victors took him to one of their own valleys. We cared for the poor Englishman, burying him where he fell. May God have mercy on his soul!"

During the next sad days Father Chanel was untiring in his visits to the wounded. Following his advice, Sam, his wife, and the young chief of Rotoma left the island to save their lives. Sam went to Wallis where he placed himself under instruction and became a fervent Christian. He never forgot Father Chanel and wept for three days when he learned of his death.

For the peace of the island it was necessary to oblige the remnant of the defeated army to evacuate a fortress in which it had hidden. King Niuliki's men made no secret of their intention of putting the greater number of the men to death, so it was not easy to induce them to surrender. Father Chanel implored

the king to forbid the massacre, until at last Niuliki assured him that the lives of all would be spared; and he kept his word. As soon as his wound permitted, His Majesty went to Singave, accompanied by the more influential of his chiefs. Father Chanel was of the party, and he exhorted the conquered people to be submissive that they might escape the evils certain to follow upon the king's anger. Little by little they did agree to all that Niuliki demanded and before the end of the month the two parties were completely reconciled. A feast, followed by dancing, sealed the friendship of conquerors and conquered. Father Chanel was overjoyed. He hoped that thanks to perfect peace, God's work would meet with no great obstacle, and resolved to redouble his efforts and renew his zeal.

To Father Bataillon he sent a detailed account of the war which had scourged his island and added words of encouragement in the difficulties then besetting the mission of Wallis: "It is quite possible that the persecution of your king has an effect contrary to that which he intends. While he acts as he is doing, at least religion is much talked of in Wallis, and those who talk about it, examine into it; and the examination will have happy results, be certain of that. I congratulate you on having confessors among your catechumens. Of course you have told them that they are not the first to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. You may say to Vaimotuku that I should love to cover with kisses every spot on his body bruised by order of Lavelua. God grant he will persevere, that in heaven the blows he suffered may be his glory! I know that the Lord is rich in mercy, and can, in spite of many obstacles, use this young chief for the spread of the Faith."

A canoe from Tonga had been driven by contrary winds to the shores of Wallis, and the natives thus cast into Father Bataillon's arms proved very docile to his teaching. Father Chanel had seen them during his visit to Wallis and was delighted when he learned

that their chief had been baptized. "The news of the conversion of Tupuneiafu moved me to tears," he wrote in a letter of congratulation to Father Bataillon. "May God deign to strengthen his faith! What good will come of his example! I consider the care you have lavished on this good chief as given to a whole mission. Do you remember that we said, when I was with you, that Tupuneiafu lacked nothing except the Christian faith? If his age, or his infirmities, or to be more exact, if the will of Almighty God does not permit him to open the door of Tonga and the whole archipelago to missionaries of the true faith, I am confident his children will inherit his good qualities, and that sooner or later some of us will be able, with their help, to free his country from heresy, which can never make it truly happy." This hope was realized. Father Chevron, named to establish the mission of Tonga, took home the little colony which had settled in Wallis and found in it the support and consolation he needed in face of innumerable difficulties.

During his months of absorbing work in Futuna Father Chanel had not forgotten his dear boys at Belley, and shortly after the tragic little war he wrote them a tender, fatherly letter. "My very dear friends," he began, "I thank God for having placed you, in preference to so many others, in a house where the Blessed Virgin is loved, and one which is as dear to me as my own father's cottage.

"How my poor savages would envy you if they knew of the loving care that surrounds you! Twenty-one months have passed since I came among them. The difficulties of their language have interfered with their happiness and mine. I am deeply touched whenever I enter a village, for a number of little savages are certain to clap their hands and cry, 'Pietro ka haon!' (Peter is coming.) All of them love France and long to go there. They want French names. Some day I shall give them yours which I was glad to find at the end of your nice letter.

"You must not grieve, boys, for the missionaries whom you saw set forth for Oceania. The only regret I will allow you is that there were so few of us. We are too late for the salvation of many souls. How often I have had the sorrow of seeing adults die without being able to teach them the truths necessary for salvation! It is easier when there is question of little children in danger of death; baptism suffices for them, and I have had the joy of opening heaven to a good many. A few grown people have also been baptized before death, but only after I had instructed them in the principal mysteries of our holy religion. The total number is now only thirty; it would be greater if some had not died before I knew of their illness.

"I congratulate you, dear boys, on having chosen the Blessed Virgin for your mother. Be prouder of this title of nobility than of any other. Never force so good and tender a mother to disown you. Your good professors teach you, day by day, how to be her faithful children. As a proof of my love for you and my ardent desire for your good, all during the month of August I kept the letter signed with your names on the altar where I have the happiness of saying Mass, and close to a picture of our Blessed Mother. We will have good news to send you, if you continue to pray for us.

"I beg God to pour His richest blessings upon you and all who are destined to swell your numbers. Try, by your docility and good will, to repay the tender care of your masters. I embrace you lovingly in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

One of your elder brothers,
Peter Chanel,
Pro-vicar Apostolic."

Father Chanel was never weary asking for prayers. On them he relied for the success of his apostolate. To Father Séon he wrote, "Prayer alone can give life to our ministry among the savages. Without its help all our efforts will be fruitless. May the fervent souls

who are interested in the success of our feeble efforts plead more incessantly with the Master of all hearts!" This is the refrain of all his letters. Nor were so many prayers said in vain. The Futunians began to soften in their attitude towards the Faith. To Father Bataillon he was able to send word, "On the whole the natives seem to be better disposed than at first. Longoasi is really zealous. The young girls know some hymns and a little catechism." In his journal he noted, on September tenth, "A few young men came to me this evening to talk about religion;" and two days later, "Some old men, seeing my Crucifix, asked questions which gave me an opportunity to explain very simply the plan of Redemption; and this evening I was stopped by several young men who begged me to repeat for them a hymn which they had heard in Sam's house. The interest they are beginning to manifest is surely a good sign."

The truth was that the natives loved Father Chanel. This made it easier for him to baptize children in danger of death. Under the date September eighteenth his journal has this entry, "I have just been to see some sick children. I baptized one, a son of Musumusu, to whom I gave the name, Joseph of Cupertino." Later, the king himself allowed him to baptize one of his sons. But, unfortunately, there were some who set themselves in opposition to him and his teaching. After Father Chanel's martyrdom, Musulamu testified that "The missionary had come to him to tell him of the one true God, to teach him the Catholic religion and impress upon him the uselessness of the life he was leading. 'He besought me to permit him to baptize my son. I refused, because I was foolish and stubborn and did not understand the meaning of the rite.'"

Nor were such cases rare, as the journal proves, and Brother Mary Nizier testified, adding, "When the sick insulted him and refused to listen to his instruction, he nearly always sent me to see them, saying, 'Perhaps

they will have less aversion for you.'" Sometimes it happened that Brother succeeded where he had failed. The relatives of a little girl, who had been ill for a long time, would not allow Father Chanel to baptize her. As she was in no immediate danger he was not insistent. One day, when he was away, a native told Brother Mary Nizier that the child had grown worse, and, as he afterward told, "Armed with a vial of water I went to the house. I was appalled to find it crowded with a few men and many women, for I feared that they would put obstacles in the way of the good work I had gone there to do. Lest I should arouse suspicion, I said nothing about religion; if I had, my every movement would have been closely watched. Providence came to my assistance: the relatives of the child were unwilling that she should be baptized—but her mother asked me to sit beside her! How my heart throbbed with joy!" Profiting by a favorable moment, he administered baptism. Writing to a friend to exult over his happiness, he said, "You will rejoice with me when I tell you that I have baptized, not only this little girl, but five other persons, two adults and three children, during the time I have been in Futuna with Father Chanel. They are all dead, so you see I have six intercessors in heaven!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Persecution.

Not long after peace was concluded between the two parts of the island, Niuliki left Poi to make his headquarters at Tamana. His action, criticized by some of the chiefs, was explained in several ways. Many said that he wished to please the conquered faction by living near them; others thought he was no longer willing to listen to the instructions of the missionary and longed to get away from him. After the victory, which he attributed to his god, Fakavelikele, he took advantage of every occasion to show his attachment to the old superstitious practices of the island. For a time, however, he did not change his manner towards Father Chanel and appeared to esteem him as highly as before.

But on the sixteenth of October, Niuliki passed twice through Poi, and contrary to his custom, did not go to the cabin of the missionaries. Father Chanel wished to know the meaning of a slight which was remarked by all and might have grave consequences, so he sent Brother Mary Nizier and Thomas Boog to Tamana on the pretext of buying oil, but in reality to sound the king. "His Majesty received them kindly, though we feared he had turned against us for making war on the gods of Futuna."[1] To persuade Niuliki to declare himself in favor of Christianity, seemed to be essential to the success of the mission. Father Chanel had long thought this, but to win the royal approval, or even toleration, became increasingly dif-

[1]Journal, October 17, 1839.

ficult. Victory had inflated the king's pride; and learning that King Lavelua of Wallis had refused to be converted, he thought that he would belittle himself if he acted otherwise.

The people did not know that his attitude had changed, and multiplied proofs of their respect for the new religion. Maligi, the prime minister, publicly expressed himself as favorable to it; and falling ill about this time, he was deeply touched by the care Father Chanel lavished upon him. He went so far as to say that if the king would permit it, the whole island would soon be converted.

In a letter to Bishop Devie Father Chanel said, "An old chief, who was hesitating between Christianity and the old religion of Futuna, made a trip to Wallis. He has returned to tell tales harmful to our cause. Forced to admit that Wallis will soon be Christian, he takes a satanic delight in describing the cruel treatment King Lavelua is inflicting on Father Bataillon's catechumens. He has promised to do all in his power to prevent Futuna from following the example of Wallis and is keeping his word. But, if the moment appointed by God is at hand, what can he accomplish?"

This old chief had great influence over Niuliki, and there can be no doubt it was at his suggestion that the king ceased to send food regularly to the missionaries. "To keep up appearances," Brother Mary Nizier related, "he occasionally told some member of his family to give us a few yams, but more than once we suffered with hunger. Learning that certain young men, taking pity on us, were bringing us food, he forbade them to do so, giving as his reason that because we were whites, it was he who should provide for us. Father Chanel foresaw the result of the king's altered attitude and wisely decided that we should work for our own sustenance."

On the twenty-first of November some natives helped them to make a fence and to plough a little field. The toil thus begun was continued to the end.

Regarding their new work Brother Mary Nizier wrote, "How many obstacles had to be overcome before we could eat of the fruit cultivated with so much difficulty! We were not strong enough for hard work, and our weakness, aggravated by lack of nourishment, increased from day to day. If you remember the heat of a tropical sun such as we have in Futuna, you will have some idea of our trials. Weak as he was, Father Chanel bore our wearisome toil more courageously than I. He often worked in the field, while I busied myself about lighter tasks within the house.

"I was always astonished and edified to see him hungry, worn with fatigue, and scorched by the heat of the sun, but as joyous as if he had had all that heart could desire; and this, not once, but always. Neither the difficulties I have mentioned, nor those that came later, ever shook his courage, even for a moment. In our hours of suffering I often heard him say, 'The time for mercy has not yet come.' To hasten it he made many novenas. In his humility he regarded himself as an obstacle in the way of God's grace; I knew this, for one day he said to me, when we were about to begin a novena, 'Make it that God may take away whoever interferes with the conversion of the island. If it is I, well—' He did not finish the sentence, but I understood."

There was a saying of Father Colin's which Father Chanel never forgot in times of trial. When difficulties beset the newly founded Society of Mary, its holy founder would exclaim, "The Society is taking a step forward!" Confronted with the ever growing opposition to his mission and the troubles which followed in its train, Father Chanel often said to Brother Mary Nizier, "Religion is taking a step forward in Futuna." One point he had gained: the natives now told him whenever any one fell ill; and undaunted by rebuffs, he visited the sick often, by his kindness

nearly always winning, at last, the good will of the family and sometimes the conversion of the patient.

One of the king's little sons, who had been ill for several days, was carried to a house believed to be favored by various gods, but instead of improving, he grew worse. Father Chanel visited him many times and at last obtained permission to baptize him. He thought it would be well to administer the Sacrament solemnly to impress Niuliki and his relatives. In his journal he wrote, "I started for Tamana about noon, with everything I needed for the baptism of the king's son. I had begged the mother's consent before I asked Niuliki's. He gave his readily. I put on my surplice and stole, and after saying a little prayer on my knees I began the ceremonies. Each thing I used excited their curiosity. I gave the name Mary Theodore to the baby. The king and all who were present seemed to be pleased with the few words I said before I came away."

Nevertheless Niuliki abandoned none of his superstitious practices. The next day he carried an offering to some god, hoping to obtain the cure of his son; and when the child died, he tore his face until it was covered with blood and repeated this barbarous rite for several days. In his inconsistency, he permitted Father Chanel to baptize his grandson, and when the baby died was willing that he should have Christian burial. "The ceremony silenced the moans and cries of the natives and dried their tears. Many of them said to us afterwards that it was beautiful, and they wished to be buried in the same way."[1] But in spite of his zeal, untiring labor, and ingenuity in devising ways of presenting our holy Faith to the reluctant, Father Chanel succeeded in touching neither the chiefs nor the mass of the people, who continued to be strongly attached to their superstitions.

A drought was endangering the crops of the island, and the king and his advisers, in a council held at

[1]Journal, December 9, 1839.

Tamana, decided to build a house in Fakavelikele's honor, that rain might come and the harvest be bountiful. "The best workmen from each village assembled in Poi. They were astonished that I did not offer to lend my tools and mingle freely with them to examine their work. I told them that they were not working for the true God, and I was unwilling to have my tools work for the devil."[1]

But Fakavelikele sent no rain. On the nineteenth of December Father Chanel passed through Tamana and preached to the people. The king turned away and would not listen. "Those who remained asked me to pray to my God for rain, adding that theirs had deceived them. They said that if it rained they would carry me in triumph on their shoulders. I told them not to trifle with the one true God, but to turn to Him in the simplicity of their hearts."[2]

By this time Father Chanel knew the Futunian language perfectly, and during the sixteen months that remained to him, he not only prayed for the conversion of his dear islanders, but preached to them with unwearied zeal. The witnesses, examined before his beatification, testified that "he gave himself with great ardor to the preaching of the Gospel, going from village to village, that all might hear the word of God." He was opposed at every step. Not slow to take advantage of Niuliki's ever increasing dislike, chiefs and people began a persecution which ended only with his martyrdom. The natives taunted and insulted him, flaunted their superstitious practices before his eyes, threatened him, and would have starved him if they could. Day after day they annoyed him in a thousand petty ways; for instance, they would go to his house at any hour of the day and make themselves as disagreeable as possible. The king being told of their conduct, gave Father Chanel permission to send away whoever disturbed him, but his friendship was

[1]Journal, December 2, 1839.
[2]Journal, December 19, 1839.

no longer to be counted upon. Both missionaries knew this; and so did the natives.

Long, fatiguing walks over the steep mountains and through the valleys, unremitting and unaccustomed toil, and insufficient food were ruining Father Chanel's frail health. Early in March he was unable even to say Mass, but as soon as a little rest had helped him, he resumed his visits to the various villages, everywhere preaching God's word in public and in private. His great desire was to convert the king, and he profited by every opportunity to instruct him. On March seventeenth Niuliki took some yams to Father Chanel, and entering his house remained long enough to sharpen a tool which he carried with him. Taking advantage of a moment when they were alone, the Father spoke to him of the new religion. Niuliki contented himself with saying that it would be well if those who wished to become Christians would do so, which Father Chanel knew he did not mean. Again and again in his journal he speaks of similar efforts to interest and to influence His Majesty.

In spite of the ill treatment which had become the missionary's portion, several young men attached themselves to him more and more closely. To Father Convers he was able to write, "I have a few catechumens; some of them are not openly taking instructions, but all are standing firm against the opposition of their own families." One of them went to live with Father Chanel at this time, when all the world was turning against him.

Such was the state of things when a great and unexpected joy came into the lives of the lonely Marists. On May sixteenth Father Chevron and Brother Attale landed in Futuna, sent by Bishop Pompallier to live alternately in Futuna and Wallis. They had already been in Wallis, where they had left Father Bataillon surrounded by eight hundred catechumens, and in the clutches of a persecution more violent than any that had preceded it, but which he felt would be the last.

Missioners and Natives of Futuna
Frs. Hervé, Quiblier, Haumonté, and the Chief of Singave

Father Chevron brought with him a letter from Bishop Pompallier addressed to Fathers Chanel and Bataillon and Brothers Mary Nizier and Joseph Xavier, expressing his regret at having been unable to visit them, as he had promised to do. His Lordship had not forgotten Niuliki and sent him messages which Father Chanel read to him. The king was greatly flattered and declared that his island would soon become Christian.

The schooner which had brought Father Chevron was to set sail on the following day and Father Chanel spent the night in writing his letters.

To Father Convers he said, "I am deeply grateful for your interest in my troubles. It is true that in leaving France to come to Oceania I did not say goodbye to this vale of tears; but here, as in France, God knows His own and fills them with joy in the midst of suffering. His work is not yet well advanced in our little island; however, thanks to the prayers of the members of the Propagation of the Faith, I am certain that some day our efforts will be crowned with success."

In a long letter to Father Colin he wrote, "A ship, newly arrived from New Zealand, did not bring me the ineffable joy of a visit from Bishop Pompallier; but I cannot tell you how happy I am to have a brother Marist to encourage me by his zeal and his companionship. It is Father Chevron who is sent to me, and Brother Attale is with him." He then enumerated the causes which retarded the conversion of the Futunians, giving the first place to his sins and his lack of zeal; he mentioned, too, the delay of Bishop Pompallier's visit, the persecution to which the catechumens of Wallis were being subjected and fear of the royal displeasure. He said that Niuliki himself was afraid of what his people would say if he rejected a god supposed to dwell in his person and of whom he had often spoken to them as being very powerful and terrible. It would have cost him dear to tell his subjects that he had duped them. Such were the obstacles

to his conversion; serious ones, for self love and human respect are not confined to civilization.

With characteristic charity Father Chanel continued, "I cannot say enough in praise of my natives. They are very hospitable, and do not steal like most of the savages of Oceania. * * * * Some Europeans whom I have met assure me that, once converted, the Futunians will make the best Christians in all Polynesia. God grant they are good prophets!"

In another letter he said, "Pray, will you not, dear Father, that God's word may not be sterile in our mouths. Pray for all the natives of Oceania. The harvest is abundant, but the number of workers very small. Some mishap obliged Father Chevron to spend a few days in Fijii and Tonga on his way to Futuna, and he treated the savages of both places with a kindness and devotedness worthy of a Catholic priest. His own appearance and his crucifix impressed them deeply, and many exclaimed, 'He is indeed a good missionary!' The time seems favorable for us to penetrate these other archipelagoes. The Methodists are ahead of us in great numbers. Ah God knows my heart! He knows how willingly I would brave the perils of the sea and the danger of persecution! But we are too few.

"Dear Father, knock often at Mary's heart; and you will be able to send us a throng of missionaries. When my savages ask me if, after our day, more French priests will come to live among them, I always reply, 'We will soon go to heaven to receive our reward, but our mission will not die. Our brothers will replace us, and will pray beside our graves.'"

From the day of their arrival in Futuna Father Chevron and Brother Attale helped their brothers in the manual work which had become necessary if they were to live. "Want often stared us in the face," Brother Mary Nizier said afterward. In time, an abundant harvest crowned their labor, but when they hoped, at last, to have plenty of food, a form of per-

secution, altogether unforeseen, came to trouble them: the natives began to steal their fruit. Father Chevron wrote, "Though the king had loaned Father Chanel a large field on which grew banana and cocoanut trees, all in splendid condition, thanks to his care and Brother's, we were sometimes almost destitute. But Providence did not fail us. More than once we were reduced to rations which few would have found sufficient, but at least we were never obliged to take the breakfast I had known in Wallis which consisted of a drink of kava and a nap to forget our hunger." The frequent thefts of the natives were evidently the result of an agreement among them. Several persons told Father Chanel that Niuliki not only knew of the stealing, but had commanded, or at least was encouraging it. He thought he would wear out the patience of the missionaries and oblige them to leave Futuna—little understanding the strength of an apostle who has left all things for love of Jesus Christ.

In the midst of these trials Father Chanel was always gentle, always gay. With exquisite kindness he welcomed all the natives who came to him, and did them every service in his power. The witnesses, examined after his martyrdom, testified that he never showed the least indignation against the thieves; that gentle, patient, humble, and charitable, he loved to the end those who persecuted him, and did all in his power to convert them. Nevertheless he did send Father Chevron to Tamana to complain to the king of the conduct of his neighbors in Poi, who seemed to have banded together to make it impossible for him to remain among them. He asked, also, that the newcomers might be given a house in another part of the island where they could be more comfortable. Niuliki made no reply.

In the midst of these sordid difficulties the two priests never for a moment lost sight of the reason for their presence in Futuna. The arrival of a fellow priest and the growing persecution served to increase

Father Chanel's zeal. He decided that on Pentecost Sunday the Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in their little chapel. In the evening of the feast after Vespers, he gave Benediction for the first time in Futuna, and afterwards preached for a few minutes to some natives who were present. It was a day of days for him: the first in three years that he had been close to his Lord and Love from sunrise to sunset. As Father Chevron wrote, "We were too happy to think of the poverty of our tiny chapel. The Blessed Sacrament was under the same roof with us four poor religious voluntarily exiled for love of It." Corpus Christi was celebrated in the same way. On both days the more fervent among the catechumens were present at all the services and Father Chanel prayed with them in Futunian before they went away.

These catechumens were suffering much from their families because of their love for Catholicity; and within the octave of Corpus Christi three young men of Singave took refuge with Father Chanel to escape the unbearable conditions surrounding them at home. They had been in his house for two days when a native came to tell them that some of the people, enraged by the course they had taken, threatened to burn their houses if they did not return to Singave at once. Heartbroken, two of them left Father Chanel's cabin; the third remained.

The missionaries felt that they could not allow this incident to pass without demanding an explanation of the king. Father Chanel went to Tamana, and not finding Niuliki told his counsellors what had happened, and reminded them of his kindness to the people, and of the little presents he had made them. The old men admitted that the islanders owed him much, but denied that there was any foundation for the tale which had been carried to the catechumens. At this juncture the king arrived. "Has your Majesty any complaint to make against us?" Father Chanel asked him. "None," Niuliki replied. But he did not mean what he said.

The next day he went to the funeral of a young man who had repeatedly refused baptism and had made it impossible for Brother Mary Nizier to baptize a dying child. The king took advantage of this occasion to reveal his real sentiments. "Understand," he said, "that Poi belongs to me. I do not want people to go there to pray. If some of my subjects wish to join this new religion let them build houses in their own villages where they may hold their meetings."[1]

Informed of what Niuliki had said the catechumens adopted a new plan. They hid themselves on Saturday evenings, and when they could do so unobserved, slipped into Father Chanel's house, where the missionaries spent the greater part of the night in instructing them. At first all returned to their homes immediately after Mass; later, some remained for High Mass and catechism lessons and were present in the evening at Vespers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Meanwhile the feeling against missionaries and catechumens grew steadily. Early in July two young men stole into Father Chanel's cabin one night to tell him how cruelly they were being treated. "No one will speak to us. When we join any company, all begin to laugh at us and to mock us," they complained. Both priests congratulated them on having something to suffer for Christ and encouraged them to persevere in spite of taunts and insults.

Father Chanel went again to the king, but could get no satisfaction. "I will speak to my people," was the only answer he made and nothing came of the interview. Some men who were standing near said to him, "We have learned that there are bad people among the whites; that some of them are thieves and murderers." "That is true," Father Chanel admitted; "But all honest men despise them. You might have been told, also, a great deal of good about those who obey their consciences and practice the religion I have come to preach." A native, called Farema, distin-

[1]Journal, June 24, 1840.

guished for his facile tongue and his hatred of Christianity, wished to argue with him, but knowing how fruitless such a discussion would be, Father Chanel said good-bye to the king and returned to Poi.

Farema was an avowed enemy, and it was easy to see that Niuliki, influenced by him, was hardening his heart against the missionaries and their message. The king's example was followed by the chiefs in their eagerness to stand high in his favor. They feared, too, that by becoming Christians, they would lose their authority, supposed to dwell in them through the friendship of certain gods. The mass of the people, densely ignorant and horribly superstitious, dared not renounce their traditions. "If we become Christians," they said, "Our evil deities will eat us in their anger" (meaning that they would die). And they feared, not only the gods, but Niuliki, and believed that with the triumph of the new religion, all public celebrations, all dances, and all marriage feasts would end forever.

Is it surprising that few attached themselves to Father Chanel? As Father Servant said, "There were so many obstacles in the way that the seed of Christianity could be sown only slowly and noiselessly. It was the young generation, better disposed because their souls were purer, that received the Gospel with some courage."[1]

Father Chevron confirmed this view: "The greater number of the natives are deaf to the promptings of grace, though secretly many of them tell us that they desire to embrace the Faith. We believe that the young mean what they say; all our hopes are founded on them. The old, guilty of the horrible crime of cannibalism so common in earlier reigns, are tainted almost beyond redemption." He added that the fear of being obliged to lead better lives kept some aloof from Christianity. But all these difficulties did not daunt Father Chanel's zeal. He preached constantly and sought the natives out, one by one in private,

[1]Father Servant: History of Christianity in Futuna.

trusting that, at last, God would make the good seed to fructify in the hard soil on which he cast it.

In the autumn of 1840 his heart was gladdened by the conversion of Thomas Boog. During all the time he had spent in Futuna Father Chanel had spared no effort to win him to the true faith, and he was overjoyed when Thomas asked to be received into the Church. He was baptized conditionally and made his first confession on the eve of All Saints. On the feast he heard Mass and received Holy Communion with edifying reverence. A number of natives were present and seemed to be deeply impressed.

Shortly after this a schooner anchored at Futuna, bringing a letter from Father Bataillon which contained wonderful news. The entire population of Wallis, with the exception of King Lavelua and some members of his family, had become Christian. A banner of the Blessed Virgin had been carried in triumph the length of the island, by fervent, happy neophytes. Father Chanel's joy was too deep for words. He was able to judge for himself of the good dispositions of the natives, a few of whom had come on the schooner. Two of their number went to Poi on Sunday, were present at Mass, and remained for hours in the chapel, praying in their own language and singing hymns. Everyone in Poi and Singave and at Tamana heard of the conversion of Wallis, and the neophytes were eagerly questioned. Only the king and his close friends held aloof.

A few days later Father Chanel sent the two lay-brothers to a distribution of food which followed a pagan feast. To their astonishment no one paid any attention to them. The king deliberately turned his back, and they got nothing until Meitala, Niuliki's eldest son, was moved to compassion and threw them a piece of liver. "To what should I attribute this change?" Father Chanel wrote in his journal. "Have we displeased His Majesty, or is the extraordinary

progress of religion in Wallis the cause of his coolness? God knows."

In his letter Father Bataillon had asked that Father Chevron be sent to help him instruct his catechumens and prepare them for baptism. Father Chanel did not hesitate to make this last sacrifice. It seemed to be for God's glory that his companion should go, and God's glory was all he sought. His difficulties pushed into the distant future the moment when he would need such assistance. But, always hopeful, he went twice to see the king before Father Chevron's departure, longing to be able to send word to Father Bataillon that at length Niuliki had yielded to the pleadings of grace. His Majesty was deaf to all arguments, and the letter which Father Chevron carried to Wallis was as follows:

"Dear Reverend Father:

"We are deeply interested in the marvellous work you are doing, so I am willing that Father Chevron and Brother Attale should leave us to share your labors and your consolations. The news of the conversion of your island seems to have stirred the hearts of our Futunians; but alas, our poor king appears to feel in honor bound to follow the example of Lavelua; and since his late victory, he clings more closely than before to Fakavelikele. Nevertheless, the tidings from Wallis have agitated him. I hope they may have real influence over his mind.

"Some of the natives have threatened to roast the young men who joined the catechumens who came to us from Wallis. This has intimidated them a little. God grant that the example of your catechumens will give them strength. Father Chevron will have good and bad tidings of our island, but I am confident that the fervor of your neophytes will in the end work the conversion of Futuna."

To Father Colin, Father Chevron wrote not very long afterward, "It was with deep regret that I left

Futuna where Father Chanel was being cruelly persecuted. One thought consoles me: that I sacrificed the crown of martyrdom by my obedience, the greatest sacrifice a missionary could make. Four months after my departure my saintly brother received the palm refused to me."

Left alone Father Chanel but worked the harder. He went unwearyingly from village to village, announcing God's word to his stubborn people, in the exercise of this ministry needing all his charity and sweetness to keep from growing impatient over the childish questions put to him. One day, for example, he was explaining the dogmas of the Creation and the existence of one God in three Persons. A number of natives seated around him, listened in silence for a time, but at length one of them said, "You have seen our king do extraordinary things. Has he not a true god within him?" Niuliki was standing nearby. He pretended to hear nothing, but Father Chanel knew that he was listening to every word; nevertheless, he answered, "No, my friends; the one true God does not dwell in the hearts of those who refuse to know and to adore Him." Another native then said, "Show us your God. Where is He?" "He is everywhere, but being a spirit, He cannot be seen with bodily eyes. You will see Him after you die, if you make yourselves worthy by leading good Christian lives." A third man asked, pointing to the Crucifix which the missionary wore in his belt, "Isn't that your God?" Taking the Crucifix in his hand and holding it before them, Father Chanel replied, "This is the image of my God, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who died for us on the cross." Then he explained the mystery of the Redemption, and some of those who listened could not conceal their tears.

Others said to him, "If we reject the religion of our fathers, the gods will make us die. You say your God is all powerful; ask Him to cure our sick relatives. Since you came to Futuna we have had more

sickness than ever before; storms have uprooted our trees, and we have been threatened with famine." "My friends," Father Chanel replied, "if you become Christians you will not die, but exchanging this life of trial for endless happiness, you will live forever. Your island has been scourged because you constantly offend God by your sins. I came from a distant country to teach you to love Him, and you will not listen to my voice. Become Christians and you will disarm God's anger; be sober and industrious and lay aside provisions for bad seasons and you will not need to fear famine." Some exclaimed, "He is right!" Others "He is cunning; he is trying to made us abandon the religion of our fathers. Let us go away."

Day after day such dialogues were repeated, but if Father Chanel's patience was never exhausted, the same cannot be said of his frail body, worn by hard work and long journeys on foot, ill nourished and ill clothed.

One afternoon in the course of a walk, he saw some natives talking together in the shade of a cocoanut tree, and approaching, he asked, with his sweet smile, what they were talking about. "We were speaking of you and Brother Mary Nizier," they answered. "We were saying how beautiful your religion is." "Ah yes, my friends, it *is* beautiful!" Father Chanel cried joyfully. "It is the only religion worthy of being known and loved. Do not adore your false gods. Jehovah created all things. The heavens are high, the earth is large, the sea is immense, the sun and stars are magnificent, but Jehovah, who made them all, is infinitely greater and more beautiful than they. Do not be afraid of taboos, nor of Alouamouli and Fakevelikele; fear only sin which offends the one true God and drags the souls of men into the flames of hell."

Such earnest words could not always fail of effect and the number of those who listened willingly, slowly grew larger. During the months immediately preceding his martyrdom, the work of grace was very evi-

dent in Futuna. Many would have embraced the Faith had they not feared Niuliki and his friends. A few young men bravely cast aside their superstitious practices and joined the slender ranks of Father Chanel's catechumens; but their Sunday reunions aroused the anger of the enemies of Christianity and of the king in particular. Things came to such a pass that the people of Poi went about repeating this cry, "Let us do away with this new religion! We must stamp it out!" Many wished to see Father Chanel put to death. Meitala, Niuliki's eldest son, testified long afterward that the apostle knew his life to be in constant danger, but remained at his post, and tranquilly continued his work of trying to convert, not only the catechumens, but all the islanders, even his persecutors. Every one loved him because he was so loving. The man with the kind heart, the natives called him. It was his religion that was hated.

It became increasingly difficult for him and Brother Mary Nizier to get food. What fruit and yams they raised were stolen, and they rarely received gifts of provisions, as in the early days of their stay in Futuna. The little food they managed to get had to be guarded constantly, and what the natives could not steal they tried other means of obtaining. One afternoon in December a young man offered to help the missionaries to prepare their dinner. When the meal was ready a number of natives gathered in the house to share it with them. Father Chanel was obliged to send them away, saying that he had not food enough for all. They were hardly gone before others replaced them, begging to be fed. "Oh my God, make me patient!" Father Chanel murmured; and he wrote these words in his journal after the account of this day, typical of many others. A time came when he was obliged to kill their dog, because there was no other food to be had. Hunger made it possible for him to eat its flesh, but Brother could not overcome his repugnance sufficiently to touch it. Nor was it

food alone that the natives stole from them. Their clothing was also taken; and it was worse than useless to complain to the king.

Niuliki continued to go occasionally to their house in Poi, keeping up a pretense of friendship long after it had become a mockery. Entering their cabin, on December eleventh, he said angrily, "Why didn't you send a gift to the young couple whose marriage feast was just celebrated?" Brother was not slow to reply, "Because your people have impoverished us by their thefts, and Your Majesty will not take the trouble to make them return our goods." The king said nothing.

A few days later Father Chanel heard that Niuliki was going from place to place predicting a great storm to come in four days, and the fall of the sun four months later. No one knew what he meant by these mysterious words, but it was generally believed that he referred to the new religion and its apostle. On the fourth day Niuliki passed Father Chanel's cabin without entering it, and meeting Thomas Boog in the house of his prime minister, did not speak to him. That same afternoon he announced his intention of sending the missionaries away on the first ship to anchor near the island. It was about this time that Niuliki's relatives began to urge him to put Father Chanel to death. For a time the king resisted them, but four months later he decreed the murder, thus causing "the fall of the sun."

On Christmas day Father Chanel had fresh evidence of the king's dislike for Christianity, and in consequence, for himself, but he was not troubled and did not change his ordinary routine. Truly his patience and charity towards the natives during these last months was heroic to a degree before which we must bow in deepest admiration and reverence. The Futunians themselves confessed afterwards that they had annoyed him in every way their ingenuity could devise, entering his house day and night to throw

At Tonga, with Frs. Guitta and Loyson

everything it contained into utmost confusion and to steal food he needed to ward off starvation. But not once did he become angry with them, as they afterwards admitted with shame. They abused him and he answered them kindly; they refused to listen to his teaching, and he continued to render them every service within his power. "They are more to be pitied than blamed. They know not what they do," he would say to Brother Mary Nizier.

This unalterable kindness and this patience in every trial made a profound impression upon the better disposed among the natives. Maligi, prime minister and chief of Poi, convinced at last by Father Chanel's instructions and his example, attached himself to him forever, though it was only after the martyrdom that he spoke openly in favor of Christianity.

With the passing of the weeks the persecution gained in violence. Many thought it was not enough that the catechumens were mistreated; they should all be killed and the new religion thus driven from the island. On January twenty-fourth a number of them stopped the catechumens on the road and threatened to put them to death if they went to Mass. The next day the king held a council whose sole business was the affairs of the missionaries. Niuliki and his friends were angry because certain young men, against their expressed wish, continued to help Father Chanel and Brother to cook their meals, and even carried food to them. It was decided to renew the prohibition to give them anything. The two strangers were to live as best they could—or not at all. The catechumens in question bore the hardly euphonius names, Longoasi, Maitau, Malaefaitu, Tukumuli, Pipisenga, Sangongo and Namusingano. They had long braved the taunts and bad treatment of their fellows and, paying no heed to the new decree, secretly continued to aid Father Chanel. As one of them afterwards told, "We cooked food in our house and carried it to the servant of God. We said we were taking it to Thomas

Boog who had married one of our relatives. We acted as we did because we feared the king."

Brother Mary Nizier wrote that, "On the eve of a pagan festival a number of old men gathered in our house. They began to discuss the king's designs, but in a guarded way which they thought I would not understand. One said 'Those two ought to be put out of the way.' 'Why?' asked a native who did not live in Futuna. 'It is the king's intention,' they told him; adding, 'Shall we allow men to come from a foreign country and rule our island? They must be done away with. The king wills it.' Father Chanel was weeding our field and I went to tell him what had been said. 'Why do you work so hard, Father, when we may die tomorrow?' I asked; and I repeated all I had heard. He stopped his work for a few seconds, and with a calmness such as I had never seen even in him, he said, 'The day of our death will not be our worst day. Don't you remember what St. Aloysius said when asked what he would do if he knew he were to die within an hour?' And without another word he continued his work."

Nor did the threats of his enemies make Father Chanel abandon his apostolic labors. To prepare the way for the triumph of Christianity he translated into Futunian a short exposition of Catholic doctrine. He also composed hymns in the same language and had them sung at the Sunday reunions. "Though forbidden to enter our house," Brother related, "our catechumens, often accompanied by some friends, came to Poi nearly every evening at sunset and loitered about the neighborhood until they could slip, unobserved, into our cabin." They were always warmly welcomed, instructed, and sent away consoled and strengthened. Again and again they managed thus to hear God's word, in spite of the mockery to which they were subjected and threats of death which had become a commonplace. The persecution extended even to Singave, long friendly to Father Chanel. One

day, unable to go there himself, he sent Brother Mary Nizier to do what he could for a little girl, ten years of age, whose mother was enraged because she wished to become a Christian. The child used to steal away into the woods to pray, and she kept carefully and lovingly hidden a medal of the Blessed Virgin which Father Chanel had given her. When she heard of his death she cried, "I, too, want to die for love of God. I want to go where the good Father has gone!"

Some weeks before the martyrdom Niuliki, irritated by the increasing number of catechumens, decided that the missionaries must move to a house near his own in Tamana. With Father Chanel living under his eyes, he thought the neophytes and catechumens would not dare to hold any intercourse with him. "This project was never carried out, but it was well known that the authorities intended to destroy Christianity in the island, even if, to do so, it became necessary to burn the homes of the catechumens and scatter them to different parts of the island. Hatred of the Faith was carried so far that it was declared a punishable offense to make the Sign of the Cross or to murmur a prayer after meals. Two young men of Poi were fined for going too frequently to Father Chanel's cabin.

"The men of King Niuliki's party came to the conclusion that it would be well to check the spread of Christianity while its friends were few. To wait would be dangerous, for if the catechumens were allowed to become numerous they could defend themselves. The matter was serious, in the eyes of the pagans; but the people could do nothing without the king's consent. Father Chanel had been declared taboo, and only Niuliki and those near to him had a right to take his life."[1] It was not hard to foresee that they would be asked repeatedly to do so, nor that, sooner or later, they would consent.

[1]Father Servant: History of Christianity in Futuna.

Impelled by his love for the ceremonies of the Church, Father Chanel determined to celebrate Easter as solemnly as possible. He made everything ready in his little house and sent messages to all his catechumens. That same day in the valley of Poi, they were rejoicing over the marriage of the son of Misa, a warrior renowned for his bravery. Some of the guests, enemies of Christianity, saw the catechumens slip away towards Father Chanel's house and proclaimed the fact on all sides, arousing such fury that a number of men declared they would not eat of the marriage feast until they had wrecked the missionaries' cabin. They had seized their lances when Misa hurried from his house, saying that if any one harmed Father Chanel there would be no feast. This quieted the greedy trouble-makers. Some one warned the catechumens of what was passing and most of them fled, terror stricken, before the end of Mass. One of their number, who had not been present, heard the threats and ran to the chapel to protect his friend. Father Chanel thanked him, but said quietly, "It is well for me." Presently another catechumen came to tell of the danger, and while he was there some one hammered on the bamboo lattice that surrounded the house, crying, "Keep on, young men! Treat your priest as you are doing and you will be the cause of his death." All who were within heard the words; and again Father Chanel said, "It is well for me."

Later in the day Niuliki entered the cabin, bringing a basket of cooked yams and a little half-cooked pork. Brother thought that he had come to see how many catechumens he would surprise there. There were only two in the house at the time. Father Chanel received His Majesty with his habitual gentleness and courtesy. "We have had almost nothing to eat today, but Providence has come to our assistance," he said. Niuliki's visit was short, and it was his last.

Some days later Father Chanel learned that again there was question of obliging him to move to Tamana

as a step towards the uprooting of Christianity. Three men in particular were bent on using every means to this end. One of them, Musumusu, son-in-law of Niuliki, was overheard to say, "Your Majesty, what this white man is trying to do would lead to the destruction of the kingdom; it would end all public festivities, and all marriage feasts." Niuliki replied, "If this is true the religion must be stamped out." But a last joy was reserved to the apostle before the powers of darkness had their way.

Meitala, eldest son of the king, had befriended the missionaries from the first and had listened attentively to their words, but unable to persuade him to be baptized, Father Chanel had prudently kept secret their intimate talks. Believing that the entire island would soon be converted if the prince declared himself in favor of Christianity, Father Chanel made another effort to win him to God's cause. He sent two zealous catechumens to his house to talk to him. As Meitala himself told, "One day two men came to see my sister and me. The Father had sent them to persuade us to embrace the Faith. Our discussion was prolonged far into the night, and at last, we said that we wished to be baptized. Father Chanel's friends hastened back to Poi to tell him of our conversion. He was overjoyed. The next day he came to see us and talked for some time. He said he would return to bring us medals of the Blessed Virgin, but he died before he could come again. The Father spread the news of my conversion in the hope of inciting others to follow my example." More than one did so. Though he was burning with fever, Father Chanel seemed to multiply himself in his effort to make the most of the impetus given to the conversion of Futuna by Meitala's open profession of faith. Day and night he instructed his converts with no thought of his own weakness and pain. On the twenty-second of April he wrote, "I am a little better, though not perfectly well." These words end the journal.

Longoasi, one of the catechumens, more fervent than wise, seeing some sign of a movement in Father Chanel's favor, declared openly that he feared no one and would work until the Faith had triumphed in Futuna. His words were repeated on all sides and fanned the irritation of the enemies of Christianity. A friend of Father Chanel's told afterward, "The king said to the people, 'You must not go to the missionary's house to learn what he calls religion; if you do not obey me the missionary shall die.' These words I repeated to the Father, and he said simply, 'It is well.' The next day when he was teaching me my prayers the king knocked at the door of the cabin. I ran out by another door and fled by a sheltered path to a nearby village where I took a bath. Soon Niuliki came to the place where I was bathing. He threatened me with a war-club which he carried, crying, 'You must not go to the white man's house! Keep away from him, lest in the end he be put to death. What he calls religion is useless and must be driven from the island.' I went back and repeated these words to the Father, and again he said only, 'It is well.'"

That same day Niuliki held a council. After it closed Musumusu, son-in-law of the king, went home to get a sick child to present her to His Majesty, as was the Futunian custom. It was believed that the king's god could cure every ailment. Musumusu's wife related, "When we were in Tamana I overheard this dialogue between my husband and my father: 'Meitala is professing the Christian religion,' Musumusu said. 'Speak sternly to him about it,' the king recommended. 'What would be the use? He would not listen to me,' Musumusu said quickly. 'He is insane!' Niuliki exclaimed; and added, 'You came here to ask me what to do. Do whatever you wish. I have some affection for the missionary because I lived with him. I do not say, strike him; however, I do not forbid you. Do whatever you wish.' Musumusu answered, 'Confide the matter to me and we will do

your will.' Then they exchanged some sentences which I did not hear."

At the time no one knew what were these secret words which passed between Niuliki and Musumusu; but in 1845 the latter testified that Niuliki had said, "Are they going to succeed, these two savages who have come to enslave Futuna?" Not certain of the meaning of these words Musumusu asked the king to whom he referred: "I am speaking of those white savages who came here to make us slaves," Niuliki replied. Then Musumusu said, "If you detest these whites, have their belongings brought here and I will go and kill them." The king said nothing to this, but his wishes were well known.

On leaving Niuliki Musumusu started homeward. On the way he saw Meitala with Father Chanel's catechumens and sent a messenger back to Tamana to report this to the king, who at once went to see his son. Meeting Musumusu in the path, he asked fiercely, "Is it really true that Meitala has been converted!" "Yes, it is true," Musumusu answered. "Then he is no longer my son; you may treat him as you like."

Meitala himself told, "My father, learning that I had become a Christian, came to the house of a white man who lived in our village and sent me word that he wished to speak to me. 'Is it true,' he asked angrily, 'That you have been converted to the Christian religion?' I said, 'It is true.' 'Why?' he asked next, and I made no reply. 'Is it power you want? I am king here!' he cried. I said only, 'I did not expect any encouragement from our family.' My father went away without another word."

Much incensed, Niuliki consulted with his relatives who agreed in thinking that Christianity could be exterminated only by killing its preacher. Niuliki gave them to understand that he was of the same mind. He returned to Tamana and Musumusu went home to plot in secret with some other chiefs. They wished to find

the missionary alone in his cabin and they had not long to wait.

Father Chanel had hurt his foot and was unable to walk more than a few steps at a time, so on April twenty-seventh he sent Brother Mary Nizier to Singave to visit a sick man and to baptize any infants who might be in danger of death. That day, or the following one, he had a long talk with a young man whom he urged wholeheartedly to embrace the Faith. The youth said to him, "Nearly every one in Futuna detests Christianity. Through love of you, we, your friends, dare not embrace it, for we are afraid they will kill you, and afterwards we shall be ridiculed and despised." "Whether they kill me or not," Father Chanel replied, "The Faith has been planted in the island. It will lose nothing by my death because it is not the work of men, but of God."

During the evening of April twenty-seventh some men who were making a canoe on the island of Alofi saw three natives of Wallis go to the home of a Christian to pray; and some Futunians, coming from Poi, told them that religious exercises were being held there, and repeated Longoasi's indiscreet remarks. The men, becoming more and more enraged, determined to attack the Christians, and, getting into a canoe, they went to Vele in search of Musumusu to tell him of the resolution they had formed. In the darkness of that fateful night they plotted together, the men from Alofi, Musumusu, and his friends, against the priest who had sacrificed everything but life itself that he might save them. The sacrifice was to be consummated: the crown of martyrdom was almost won.

At first all thought to follow the advice of the natives of Alofi and do some injury to the Futunians and the men from Wallis who were practicing their religion together. Musumusu said, "Why strike at the natives of Futuna and Wallis? If you are going to harm the men of our island, harm the priest also;

but it is foolish to do anything to those people from Wallis." The others agreed that he was right. Some one then proposed to spare the catechumens, but his fellow conspirators rejected this plan. Musumusu spoke next: "In striking the catechumens we will not kill the religion; but if we put that priest to death, it will be stamped out forever." Several did not approve of his suggestion; they thought that Father Chanel should be left in peace and only the catechumens punished. Musumusu insisted, "It is necessary to kill the priest, for the new religion comes from him; if he dies, it will die." One of the conspirators asked if such measures as he proposed would please Niuliki, and was assured that they would. Finally, it was agreed that the catechumens were to be maltreated first, and afterwards Father Chanel was to be murdered. Musumusu's last words were, "We must not strike in the night, or people will say that we are cowards."

CHAPTER XIV.

Martyrdom—Conversion of the Island.

Very early in the morning of April twenty-eighth, the conspirators secretly left Vele and went to Avoui, a village not far away, in which Meitala and other catechumens lived. They sent a messenger to Meitala to say that Musumusu wished to speak to him. In the official inquiry of 1845 the prince testified, "When I approached the house in which the catechumens had passed the night, I heard cries and the sound of blows. The enemies of Christianity were cruelly mistreating Father Chanel's followers. One of the conspirators struck me violently from behind, and he struck my sister who had followed me."

All the men of Musumusu's band confessed afterward that they had pitilessly beaten the catechumens. Some of them wished to attack, also, two white men who lived in the neighborhood, but Musumusu opposed this, and the three natives of Wallis had fled to Alofi during the night; but before leaving Avoui, members of the party set fire to the homes of the catechumens. Headed by Musumusu, the conspirators then quickly made their way towards Poi. They hid themselves in woods on the outskirts of the village, and Musumusu, who had been wounded in the struggle at Avoui, sent one of his men, named Filitika, to beg a remedy from the missionary.

Father Chanel had already said his Mass and recited his office. He was alone, having sent Brother Mary Nizier to a distant part of the island. Doubtless Musumusu knew of his companion's absence, which

made it so easy for him to carry out his plans. "I entered the cabin," Filitika told afterwards, "but did not find the Father. I went to his garden and saw him there feeding his chickens. As soon as he noticed me he came towards me, saying, 'What do you want here?' I replied, 'Musumusu has been hurt, and I came to ask you to give me a little of your medicine water to cure his wound.' Then we went towards the house together."

A second conspirator now appeared, and demanded a stick which Father Chanel held in his hand. He gave it without a word. By this time Musumusu had reached the door, and Father Chanel went to him, asking, "Where did you come from?" "From Vele," Musumusu told him. "What do you mean by this visit?" the Father said next. "I came to get a remedy for my wound," his enemy replied. After a moment Father Chanel asked, "How were you hurt?" and Musumusu answered glibly, "I was beating down some cocoanuts, and one struck me as it fell." "Remain here, and I will look for a remedy," Father Chanel said.

He entered the house and went to his room to get something for Musumusu's wound. The men followed him closely. Presently he turned and saw that Filitika had seized a bundle of his clothing. "Why do you steal in my house?" he asked gently. Going into the adjoining room, he found all the conspirators there, greedily dividing his poor possessions.

Musumusu, made impatient by the delay and the cupidity of his associates, cried angrily, "Why are you so slow to kill this man?" Filitika then pushed Father Chanel violently, saying, "Strike quickly, and make an end of him!" A third man ran at him, brandishing a war-club. In his surprise, Father Chanel cried, "Do not do that! Do not do that!" and tried to parry the blow with his right arm. It shattered the arm which fell bleeding and helpless to his side, and he quickly stepped backward two or three paces. One of the

murderers then struck him violently on the left temple and blood gushed from the wound. Father Chanel said softly several times, "It is well; it is well." His savage murderers afterwards testified that neither cry nor complaint passed his lips.

After he had received the blow in the temple, one of the butchers, armed with an iron-pointed lance, rushed furiously at him and struck him in the chest. The Father reeled backward and fell to the floor.

The man who had taken Father Chanel's stick from him had already hit him with it, and did so a second time, with a fury born of his hatred of the new religion. But the saint still lived. He was seated on the floor, with his head bowed and his shoulders leaning against a stack of bamboo sticks. He often wiped away the blood that poured over his face.

For a few moments the murderers forgot him in their eagerness to get possession of what little he owned. They took everything in the house. While his friends pillaged, Musumusu stamped back and forth, shouting angrily that some one must kill the Christian priest. The others, less bloodthirsty and delighted with their booty, paid no heed, but with their arms full ran from the house; and after a few moments, Musumusu, seizing a hammer which had been left, fled in terror on the heels of his friends. Overtaking one of them, he told him several times that the missionary still lived and he must go back and finish what had been begun. Filitika had retraced his steps in the hope of finding more booty, and had got a little box and a hatchet. He was fleeing a second time, by an unfrequented path, when Musumusu saw him, and called to him. "Did we come to Poi to enrich ourselves?" he cried scornfully. Without hesitation Filitika joined him and they went back together.

At this moment one of the catechumens reached the village and ran to the missionaries' cabin. "The Father was still alive," he used to tell sorrowfully in after years. "He was sitting on the floor with blood pour-

THE CHURCH OF ALO, ISLAND OF FUTUNA

ing from his head and arm. I examined his wound, softly calling his name. He looked lovingly at me. 'Oh, they have murdered you!' I sobbed. 'Where is Maligi?' he asked. 'He is at Alofi,' I told him."

The prime minister was chief of Poi and had sufficient authority to have opposed Musumusu, and at need, to have called upon the men of the village for assistance. Learning that he was away from home, and knowing the powerlessness of the young catechist, despite his good will, Father Chanel renewed the sacrifice of his life. "For me death is a great good," he said.

By this time Musumusu had reached the house, and seeing him in the doorway, the catechumen cried angrily, "Why did you treat this poor priest so?" Musumusu's only answer was to say to his companion, "Let's throw him out of the house! He is one of the followers of the new religion." The catechumen turned again to his friend, and gently taking him by the arm helped him to his feet, intending to take him with him, if he could. "Leave me. I will remain here. Death is a joy to me," Father Chanel said faintly. The catechumen fled, then, through fear of Musumusu.

Neither Filitika, nor any of the other savages who had crept back being willing to give Father Chanel his death blow, Musumusu entered the cabin by the window of Brother Mary Nizier's room in which he found an axe. Seizing it, he ran at Father Chanel and struck him on the head with so much force that the blade entered his skull. The long, weary struggle of life was over; hunger and thirst and weakness, rebuffs and insults and disappointments, all had ended forever. The martyr's crown was won.

An instant afterward, though the sky was clear, a horrible crashing noise filled the air, and was followed by what sounded like a loud clap of thunder. The sky had darkened, as at an approaching storm, but it cleared after the thunder-clap. This marvel terrified the people of Poi, and the fleeing murderers, dropping

their booty, dashed into the woods or fell to the ground, paralyzed with fear.

Before leaving the cabin, Musumusu, frightened though he was, tore the cassock from Father Chanel's body, and two other natives almost stripped it. As he rushed madly from the scene of his crime, Musumusu met Misa, not a catechumen but a lover of Father Chanel, who ran at him, armed with a lance and a war-club. "What have you done?" he shouted, in a fury. "Don't be angry!" Musumusu cried. "You may have a share of the spoils! Here is the wealth of your god!" And throwing him the blood-stained cassock, he fled precipitately.

After the flight of the murderers, the mother[1] of Pipisenga, one of the catechumens, went to Father Chanel's house, and with the help of two other women, washed the blood-stained body. One of them gently forced back into the skull a portion of the brain which had run out, and two of the king's daughters anointed his head with oil. The body was wrapped first in "tape;" then, in mats given by Niuliki's wife, one of his daughters, and two other women. It was buried but a few feet from the missionaries' cabin in a grave dug by the king himself with the help of Musumusu and some women.[2]

The Christian priest was dead; his body had been buried; only his house remained, and it had been completely stripped. The savages levelled it to the ground to efface from the island the last traces of the new religion. Niuliki hacked to pieces the little organ

[1]Although still a pagan, this good woman did what she could in gratitude for Father Chanel's kindness to her son. God rewarded her by showering many blessings upon her and her family. When Father Bataillon visited Futuna, in 1844, he presented her with some pieces of cloth, saying that he wished to thank her for having buried the martyr. "Ah, Your Lordship," the old woman answered humbly, "I did not bury him in beautiful stuff such as this. I had nothing but strips of tape." Tape is a coarse material made of the bark of the papyrus plant.

[2]Father Chanel's cause was introduced by Pius IX, on the twenty-fourth of September, 1857. He was beatified on the seventeenth of November, 1889, by Leo XIII, and his feast set for April twenty-eighth, the anniversary of his glorious martyrdom.

whose music he had once loved; and afterwards served kava on the spot where the cabin had stood. Early the next morning his people hurried to Poi and carried away the wood of which the house had been built.

On his return from Alofi Maligi was heartbroken over what had occurred. He wept for hours beside the grave of his friend and lavished upon it the care which the Futunians were accustomed to give to the last resting places of those whom they had loved and revered. For four days he sprinkled it often with perfumed oil; and ten successive evenings covered it with mats and pieces of a kind of cloth much admired on the island. At every visit he shed tears and tore his face and breast with shells. If Father Chanel had been one of his closest relatives, he could not have done more.

In the hour of his death the martyr had been even more lonely than his Lord and Master. A few friends were close to Christ at the last, but Father Chanel had no one. Doubtless Brother Mary Nizier would have shared his suffering and his triumph had he been found in Poi. In a letter, written two days after the martyrdom, he said, "On the twenty-eighth of April, the day named for my return, I set forth towards Poi. An hour more and I would have mingled my blood with that of my guardian angel, my spiritual father, of him who was, after God, my all in Futuna! Alas, I was not worthy!

"Providence used what seems a little thing to prolong my life. We had owned a pig which had been stolen from us by one of Niuliki's friends. He had wished to keep it for himself, but the king had said that the animal should be killed and eaten at a funeral feast. The man was irritated, and to spite His Majesty, determined to save my life. He came to meet me and warned me that I should run into danger if I went to Poi. After giving me some hints as to what was passing there, he compelled me to turn back, offering to accompany me to Singave or wherever I wished

to go." The Brother chose Singave, where Niuliki's power was not very secure and his life would be in less danger.

The next day Niuliki went to Singave and sent for Brother Mary Nizier. At first he pretended to bewail Father Chanel's murder. He told Brother to go back to Poi, assuring him that no one would harm him. "Kill me here, if you wish, but I will not go to Poi," the lay-brother said. Niuliki did not insist, and went away boasting that Father Chanel had been put to death by his order.

Fourteen days after the martyrdom an American ship anchored at Futuna. Brother Mary Nizier and all other white men living upon the island fled to it at once, begging shelter and protection. The captain received them kindly. They had been none too prompt to make their escape, for the king gave an order that they were to be prevented from embarking, even if it became necessary to kill them all in doing so. The ship set sail for Wallis on the eighteenth of May, 1841.

It was undoubtedly through hatred of the Faith and by order of Niuliki that Father Chanel was murdered. In the formal inquiry of 1845, and again in 1861, every witness testified that no one in Futuna had ever said anything but that Father Chanel was put to death solely through hatred of the religion he preached. "What other motive could his murderers have had?" Father Bataillon said in his deposition. "They could not have acted as they did through a desire for the effects of the missionary, for he was poor; besides, they would not have waited so long to pillage his house and could have done so without killing him. It could not have been personal hatred: Father Chanel was the best of men. All the Futunians confessed this, and many of those who had a hand in his murder wept for him. It is certain, then, that he was beloved; it was the religion he so zealously preached that many detested. They wished to check its progress and be-

lieved that the only means of doing so was to put him out of the way."

By killing Father Chanel the enemies of Christianity throught they had attained their end. "The priest is dead, and his religion died with him," they said exultingly. They were mistaken. At Futuna history repeated itself: the old, old story was to be told again: the blood of the martyr became the seed of Christians.

Trusting to the fulfillment of Father Chanel's words, "Christianity will not perish in Futuna; after me, other priests will come to continue my work," the brave catechumens guarded their faith with loving care and cherished every remembered word of the teacher whom they had loved and venerated. For a time they dared to hold no reunions, but morning and evening all said their prayers in private, and on Sundays rested from servile work. Three of their number placed themselves under the protection of Maatala, a chief of the conquered part of the island. Niuliki and his friends were irritated and made savage threats, but the men were not greatly alarmed, for they knew they could count on the help of Maatala, pagan though he was, but related to one of them, and no friend of the king's.

The murderers feared nothing from a handful of catechumens, timid and leaderless. At public festivities they ostentatiously displayed what they had stolen from the missionaries' cabin, not respecting even the sacred vessels. Many of the natives, though still pagan to the core, had loved Father Chanel, and they were indignant over this, but fearing the persecutors, contented themselves with murmuring in secret. Providence dared to proclaim more than the timorous natives whispered. First, the violent thunder-clap, heard at the moment of the martyr's death, was plainly miraculous, and had awed and terrified hundreds of the islanders; soon, Fonoti, a brother of the king, died suddenly; he had been one of his counsellors and had played an important part in Father Chanel's martyr-

dom. Niuliki himself was stricken with a loathsome disease. His body fell into corruption, and from being enormously stout he became a mere skeleton. His friends carried him from place to place that the different gods might see his condition and cure him. He grew worse steadily and suffered excruciating torment: the hand of the Lord had indeed touched him. Several others among the persecutors died miserably. The Futunians began to believe that the Almighty was avenging His apostle.

The day soon came when the catechumens were no longer obliged to hide when they wished to pray. They began to talk openly of the Faith. Above all the rest, Meitala distinguished himself by his attachment to Christianity and zeal for its propagation. So great was the change that came over the minds of the people that hundreds of them were willing, even eager, to be Christians when the *Allier*, a small French warship, accompanied by a schooner belonging to the mission of western Oceania, reached Singave in January, 1842.

On learning from Brother Mary Nizier and his companions of the death of Father Chanel, Father Bataillon had written at once to Bishop Pompallier, and on December twentieth, of the same year, His Lordship landed in Wallis on his way to Futuna. His little vessel was protected by a French man-of-war. Sam, his wife, and several catechumens offered to go with him to act as interpreters, and their help was gladly accepted.

An article, written by a naval officer, and published in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, related that "When the warship reached Singave, that part of the island to which Brother Mary Nizier owed his safety and where Father Chanel had been especially beloved, our party learned that Niuliki and a powerful chief who had always opposed the preaching of the Gospel were both dead. M. du Bouzet, the officer in command, realizing that the king's death made easier his task of recovering the martyr's body, sent a mes-

senger to the chiefs to promise that he would do no harm to the island, richly as it deserved chastisement. Seeing the *Allier,* with its large crew and its cannon, the Futunians believed that their hour of reckoning had come and when the messenger landed, he found them in a frenzy of fear. They were planning to abandon their villages and hide in the depths of the woods. He succeeded in convincing them of the foolishness of such a course, and the wisdom of negotiating frankly and amicably with the French, who could easily exact all they were asking.

"What we wished above all else was to obtain Father Chanel's body. At first no one could be induced to bring us to it; but after a time Maligi, once Niuliki's prime minister, who had not approved of the murder of the missionary, offered to convey it to the ship. He disinterred it with his own hands and brought it to us on the following day. His friends had tried to shake his resolution by telling him that for any Futunian to board our vessel would mean his certain death, but Maligi trusted to the promise given by our messenger in the name of all our officers.

"It was at four o'clock in the afternoon of January nineteenth, that Maligi appeared on the beach with the precious remains. He was escorted by Maatala and thirty other natives, most of them former catechumens of Father Chanel's, who had intense love and reverence for his memory. Sam and his friends bowed respectfully before the body of the martyr. It was then wrapped in pieces of tape, or papyrus cloth, to which were attached many other pieces of the same material, that were allowed to hang down in token of respect. The party embarked in a small boat belonging to our ship. On reaching the deck of the *Allier,* Maligi presented M. du Bouzet with an enormous kava root to signify that he begged mercy for his people. He was kindly received and thanked for having done what he could to wash the stain of murder from his island.

"The ship's doctor examined the head of the martyr and found a fracture of the skull such as an axe-blade would have made. The condition of the body, which had just begun to putrefy, prevented as thorough an examination as he would have liked to make. He embalmed it, and it was given into the care of Father Viard, who was charged to take it to New Zealand on a schooner belonging to the mission.

"M. du Bouzet, after impressing upon Maligi the horror of the crime which had been committed in Futuna, commissioned him to recover everything still on the island which had been the property of the missionary, in particular, whatever he had used in saying Mass. He told him, also, that there was much he wished to say to the chiefs, whom he would gladly welcome aboard his ship. Maligi promised to do all in his power to carry out the wishes of the captain, and left the *Allier* very happy over some little gifts which he had received.

"The next morning the principal chiefs of Niuliki's party came on board, saying that they deeply regretted what had occurred, and bringing us a chalice, a cassock, a crucifix, and some pious pictures, which they had gathered from different parts of the island. M. du Bouzet asked them if Niuliki had had Father Chanel put to death because he had some grudge against him. 'He had none,' they replied. 'The Father did only good in Futuna; he was always kindness itself to all the natives.' They begged him to forgive the past, thanked him for having spared them, and promised to treat well all the whites who might ever come to their island, and to end forever the rivalry which for many years had caused bloodshed in Futuna. They were pleased to see Brother Mary Nizier and besought him to remain with them. There was nothing the young lay-brother would have liked better, had his superiors been willing."

Adding some details to this account, Father Viard said, "I witnessed a very touching scene. The re-

morseful Futunians begged us to forget their crime and remain among them. One of the chiefs besought me with clasped hands and tears in his eyes to send them a priest, and Brother Mary Nizier threw himself on his knees before me, imploring the favor of being permitted to stay and instruct them. Prudence forbade me to allow this, but I am confident that the blood of our beloved brother will prove to be the seed of many Christians.

"We could not persuade Musumusu to come on board. Despite our assurances of pardon he repeated sadly, again and again, 'It was not my fault; it was not my fault. Niuliki told me to kill the Father because he had converted his son.'

"As to that good old man, Maligi, who had cared for the grave of our martyr, and who brought his body to us, he said with touching earnestness, 'If I had been in my cabin when the murderers came to Poi, either Father Chanel would not have been killed, or I should have died at his feet. Ah, I shall never see him again, the Father who was so good and whom I loved so much!'

"The captain could not remain long in Futuna, so dear to us and to our whole Society, and we soon set sail for New Zealand. My heart was full of joy because we carried with us the remains of Father Chanel and the cassock stained with his blood!"[1]

According to an account of the mission written by Father Servant, Sam remained in Futuna and went from village to village in Singave, "instructing the people. No difficulty discouraged, and no threat intimidated him. Those who clung to their idolatrous

[1]The body of Blessed Peter was taken to Lyons and placed in the mother house of the Marist Fathers. It was identified on its arrival, again in 1857 by Bishop Bataillon, a third time in 1859 by Father Viard, and finally in 1875 by the judge delegated by the Sacred Congregation of Rites. It is now enclosed in a magnificent shrine, decorated by M. Amand Calliat. The martyr's chalice, missal, two chasubles, an alb, the lance, and the blood-stained cassock were given back to the mission of Futuna. The axe which dealt the death-blow is the property of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

practices, and above all the priests and the old men, bade him beware the anger of the gods, who would certainly eat him. 'If they eat me to-night,' he said, 'it will prove that you are right; but if, when to-morrow comes, I am still alive, admit their impotence and believe in the great God of the Christians.'" It was not long before all the natives of Singave became convinced that the stories about their gods, which they had always believed, were but a tissue of lies, and of their own accord they burned everything dedicated to their worship. In testimony of their gratitude to Sam, they chose him to be their king.

Under the leadership of Musumusu, King Niuliki's party followed their example. The people abolished taboos, burned their idols, and flocked to Father Chanel's catechumens for instruction. Such was the condition of Futuna when the Society of Mary reestablished its mission there.

Bishop Pompallier, who had had the joy of baptizing and confirming nearly all the inhabitants of Wallis, wished to make a tour of the islands under his jurisdiction, commencing with Futuna where he hoped to be able to leave one or more successors to Father Chanel. He embarked with three priests, two lay-brothers, the king of Wallis and about fifty others, whites and natives. The *Holy Mary,* a small ship which had become the property of the mission, anchored near Alofi, in May, 1842. "In the first canoe which came out, was one of Father Chanel's murderers," wrote Father Chevron. "In the second was the man who gave him his death blow, the too famous Musumusu. He was king of part of the island, and came to invite us to his house where some neophytes from Wallis were assembled to spend Sunday together. He gave his invitation through the king of Wallis, too much ashamed, as he told me later, to address the *relatives* of the priest whom he had been unhappy enough to kill. However, he presented himself without fear, convinced that the hands of priests give only

blessings and their lips know only words of peace. We soon disembarked, and I could never tell all the wonderful changes which had come over the island since I had left it!

"As soon as possible I visited some neophytes from Wallis and went to see our old house in Poi. Only a few posts were standing. I recognized the place where I had been accustomed to sit with Father Chanel, and saw the spot where he had received the crown of martyrdom. I spent a night in visiting the people of his village, trying to strengthen them in their good dispositions. I went to see Musumusu. He asked me to beg His Lordship to have pity on his people and give them a priest to instruct them, and showed great sorrow for his crime which he had committed, he said, to please the king.

"While we were in Futuna, Sam, his wife, and their little daughter were baptized. The whole population pleading for the same grace, we set to work to instruct the people with the help of some catechists from Wallis, and after ten days preparation Bishop Pompallier baptized and confirmed one hundred and forty of them." Father Chanel was interceding for the islanders whom he so tenderly loved.

Father Servant, Father Roulleaux, and Brother Mary Nizier remained in Futuna to continue the work so auspiciously begun. "We commenced our ministry," wrote Father Servant, "by baptizing all the little children in Alofi and the larger island. Among them were the children of Musumusu and of the assassins who had done his bidding. With the help of Brother Mary Nizier the sick were instructed and soon received the Sacrament of Regeneration. Niuliki's wife was ill, and so boundless is God's mercy that she asked for instruction and died a few days after she was baptized, accusing herself of having borne a part in Father Chanel's death by the bad advice she had given to the king.

"It is a joy to know that our martyr is interceding for us. We are reaping what he sowed in trial and suffering."

Later, the same missionary wrote, "We have been in Futuna only eight months, and already we have two churches, and eight hundred of the natives have been baptized. Soon the two or three hundred remaining catechumens will be sufficiently instructed to be received into the Church, and some of our neophytes ready for their First Holy Communion. Sam and his wife are frequent communicants, as are a few natives of Wallis who are spending some time here with their chief, Tounghala.

"The fervor of our Christians increases from day to day. Young and old, men and women, are eager for instruction. It is both edifying and touching to see the old people sit silent about Sam, listening attentively while he explains the truths of our holy religion, after having asked our permission to do so. The influence of the Faith over these poor islanders is marvellous. Instead of the cruelty and superstition of which we told you, all is peace and charity. As they learn more about God and His Church, their love of the Giver of all good gifts grows more ardent, and if the day is not long enough to satisfy their devotion, they continue their prayers far into the night."

Poor Musumusu, crushed under the weight of his sin, and as simple as a child in his sorrow, entered the ranks of the catechumens, but had not yet been baptized when he took advantage of Tounghala's return to Wallis to go there with him and a number of neophytes. Father Bataillon told that, "falling dangerously ill soon after his arrival, he had himself carried to my house and implored me to baptize him, confessing his crime and begging forgiveness over and over again. I baptized him, giving him the name of Maurice. He got well and some weeks later returned

TONGA—CHAPEL AND CATECHIST SCHOOL DEDICATED TO BLESSED CHANEL

to Futuna with his friends, all of them very fervent and very happy."

In April, 1845, he became seriously ill for the second time. His body, as stout as Musumusu's had been, fell a prey to the same horrible disease, and his suffering was excruciating. All the natives, even his wife, looked upon his illness as a punishment for his sin. He received Extreme Unction on the eve of Pentecost, and by his own request passed the whole of the following night listening to the instruction of a catechist, and learning some little acts of love and adoration which he repeated unceasingly. The next morning he received his First Communion. "This is the happiest day of my life," he said.

For several months he lingered. His body was one great sore and his suffering unspeakable, but he made no complaint. When he knew his end was at hand he had himself carried to the scene of the martyrdom, and on reaching the spot, said to his relatives, "I will never leave this place. Here will I die." During his last hours he murmured many times "I want to die for God." He had no fear, but longed "to go home." Thus did he die, in January, 1846, the worst of Father Chanel's enemies having become the truest and humblest of his followers.

Today, Futuna is entirely Catholic. It has five priests and several native nuns. The people are reverent and devout; "the lion has become a lamb." Far from being obliged to urge the faithful to penitential practices, Father Chanel's younger brothers of the Society of Mary find it necessary to restrain their love of penance. Their purity and delicacy of conscience are extraordinary. Truly, the blood of our martyr has been the seed of many fervent Christians.

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TRIBUTES TO THE FIELD AFAR

From "*America*."

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American Catholics give signs of waking up to that which is in itself a duty and the neglect of which will become a greater reproach if they are less zealous than such as possess only a tithe of that blessed heritage of the Faith which all Catholics possess in the fulness received from Christ and the Apostles. There are a score of ways in which zeal and interest in the great cause of missionary development may be manifested. One of the simplest and the most direct, in which even those may share whose income allows them to spend but little, is the support of a paper like *The Field Afar*. If the Catholic paper in the home is a perpetual mission, a paper treating of the missions is an inspiration, an inspiration to share the highest good that man can share with his fellow man.

From the "*Catholic Guardian*," Jaffna, Ceylon.

The Field Afar is the very bright, sparkling organ of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America. We note with extreme pleasure the founding and progress of this Society and of its college for the training of American priests for the foreign missions. The young Church in America proves its vitality by the truly Catholic zeal with which it has taken up this noble work. We wish *Maryknoll* Godspeed, and may the example of the younger Church stir up the energies of her elder sister in the British Isles!

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